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Palestinian Affairs

WAFA Editor on U.S. Standards, Arrested Figures

JN2908192091 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1600 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] The political editor for the PALESTINIAN NEWS AGENCY, WAFA, has commented on reports indicating that Faysal al-Husayni and Mrs. Hanan 'Ashrawi were interrogated at the Israeli interrogation headquarters and that extremists stormed the headquarters in Petah Tiqva, abusing them and threatening to kill them.

The editor said: If the United States has a purpose to pursue, and if those attacked were two Soviet Jews in the farthermost reaches in the Soviet Union, the United States would have made an uproar of protests. But as those who were threatened to be murdered were two Palestinians, the U.S. Administration did not move and made no protests, although those targeted were not ordinary Palestinians, but Palestinian leaders in the occupied territories. Moreover, the two have held eight meetings with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker to discuss the Palestine question, the peace conference, and the stand of the Palestinian people and the PLO on these issues.

Thus, it is clear that United States is not only colluding with Israel on strategic issues, but also ignores any human rights violations, even flagrant violations, against officials with whom Mr. Baker meets when he visits the region. This further proves that U.S. standards are not balanced and adds a new scandal to the U.S. Administration's file of supporting terrorism and appeasing terrorists.

Al-Agha Outlines Draft for Accord With U.S.

PM2908142091 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 27 Aug 91 p 5

[Unattributed report with Palestinian figure Dr. Zakariyya al-Agha in London; date not given]

[Excerpts] [AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI] You helped draft the Palestinian memorandum of understanding, which will be presented to the U.S. side. What is new in this memorandum?

[Al-Agha] A draft document of understanding was drawn up. It includes several points: First, the interpretation of Resolution 242, since the U.S. side interprets it as exchanging land for peace and ending the occupation. We added the necessity for a withdrawal.

Second, the settlements issue. In this memorandum we demanded work to stop on the building of settlements with the start of the peace conference proceedings. And we mean stopping settlements in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and Jerusalem.

Third, the right to self-determination. The Americans avoided this point because it entails an independent Palestinian state and they do not support the establishment of such a state. So we decided that the memorandum of understanding must include the phrase "right to self-determination" within the framework of a confederation with Jordan.

Fourth, the affirmation of the Palestinian people's existence and unity, and that the Palestinian people must be addressed as a people, and not just as Palestinians, as the United States says.

Fifth, the transitional phase. We demanded that the transitional phase last three years, that the time limit for the negotiations in the first stage be one year, and that the negotiations for the final stage start with the beginning of the third year and end with the completion of the transitional phase. And that it be understood that the transitional phase should not last more than three years so that it will not become the final solution.

During the transitional phase the elected Palestinian authority should be in charge of the territory, inhabitants, and water.

[AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI] What is the status of Jerusalem in that memorandum?

[Al-Agha] The Jerusalem issue is fundamental, both with regard to representation and with regard to its substance. Jerusalem must be present in all stages, both the first and the second.

[AL-QUDS AL-'Arabi] How do you see a solution to the problem of Palestinian representation in the peace conference?

[Al-'Agha] We prefer an independent Palestinian delegation in any peace conference, but we could agree to a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, provided that its Palestinian part is clear and that the PLO names the Palestinian members in it who must represent all sectors of the Palestinian people both inside and outside [the occupied territories]. And provided that that joint delegation formula is the result of a distinct, clear, correct, and healthy relationship between Jordan and Palestine.

[AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI] Where does the PLO fit in the memorandum of understanding?

[Al-Agha] The PLO is the party to whom the invitation to choose the Palestinian part of the joint delegation should be addressed, since it is the PLO that will form that part.

[AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI] What about the dialogue between the PLO and the United States?

[Al-Agha] In the memorandum we urged the United States to cease its hostility toward the PLO and stressed the need to work to revive the Palestinian-U.S. dialogue.

[AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI] How do Palestinian people in the occupied territories view the peace conference and your meetings with James Baker?

[Al-Agha] The Palestinian people inside are not against a settlement or participation in peace conferences. But Palestinian citizens tend to have many suspicions about the United States, since it has lost its credibility and it is not easy for the Palestinians to trust it. The constant Israeli statements on the steadfastness of their stances on the occupied territories and the Palestinian people's rights have a negative impact on Palestinian attitudes to peace.

But if there are clear and tangible signals from the American side with regard to some of the basic matters concerning the Palestinian issue—such as halting settlements, dealing with the Palestinians as a people having legitimate national rights, and devoting to the Jerusalem issue the same importance as the Palestinian people do—then this would have a positive impact on the Palestinian masses and thus facilitate the process of the Palestinian side's making a positive decision on the proposed settlement for the proposed peace conference. [passage omitted]

[AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI] There is much talk about halting settlements. Do you believe that Israel can make concessions in this regard?

[Al-Agha] I think that Israel will not stop its settlement policy easily, because it has been the foundation of the Zionist program in Palestine since the beginning of the century. And it will not end that policy unless there is strong and decisive pressure from the United States.

[AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI] Do you expect Washington to exert such pressure on Israel?

[Al-Agha] The U.S. position is still hesitant with regard to the necessary means to halt that policy, despite the fact that they always emphasize—both in their meetings with us and publicly—that they are against that policy and that they regard it as an obstacle to peace. But hitherto they have been unwilling to exert effective pressure, such as suspending aid to Israel and other aid, on the pretext that Congress does not permit them to do so. [passage omitted]

[AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI] What do you fear most in the occupied territories now?

[Al-Agha] What we fear most in the occupied territories is the Arab-Israeli conflict's being resolved and Arab-Israeli relations normalized in isolation from the Palestinian issue, without a solution to this issue, and the Palestinians' being put between the Israeli hammer and the Arab anvil. So any solution or end to the Arab-Israeli conflict and normalization of Arab-Israeli relations must follow, not precede, the solution of the Palestinian issue. [passage omitted]

'Arafat Adviser on Peace Conference, Intifadah

JN2908161591 Amman AKHBAR AL-USBU' in Arabic 29 Aug 91 pp 1, 11

[Text] Hani al-Hasan, political adviser to Yasir 'Arafat and Fatah Central Committee member, has asserted that the U.S. Middle East peace plan aims to tighten U.S. control on the region, liquidate the Palestine question, and terminate the intifadah.

He stressed the need to adopt a sound Palestinian decision regarding U.S. moves. He said that pursuing a sound policy requires that the intifadah be maintained, as it leads to the establishment of the Palestinian people's legitimate rights. He added that adopting an incorrect decision will lead to the liquidation of the intifadah and the Palestine question.

He indicated that Palestinian leaders made a grave mistake in 1936 when they accepted Britain's guarantees for bringing Jewish immigration to a halt. He hoped that the mistake we made over half a century ago will not be repeated this year.

He talked about the letters exchanged between U.S. President Bush and Shamir. He said: These letters stressed that Arab-Israeli negotiations will be multiphased and that there will be no prior commitments for each phase.

He added that Shamir was reluctant to accept the U.S. plan before receiving Bush's letter because it was clear that the plan called for a comprehensive Israeli withdrawal and the exchange of land for peace. However, he said, Bush's letter assured Shamir that U.S. proposals will not ignore Israel's demands.

Al-Hasan stressed that what is currently proposed is similar to the Camp David treaty, but badly distorted.

He continued: Baker and Pickering told the Palestinians that the Israelis refuse to halt settlement activity before the start of negotiations. Moreover, they stressed that settlement activity, like any other subject, will be on the peace conference agenda. What is being offered are negotiations only. There is no hint about "implementation" at all.

Al-Hasan drew a comparison between what he termed the Egyptian Camp David and the Palestinian Camp David. He said: In the Egyptian treaty, President Anwar al-Sadat stressed that no inch of Egyptian territory is negotiable, and that the treaty should provide for withdrawal first, after which outstanding issues would be addressed. The Palestinian Camp David, however, did not include any clause about a full Israeli withdrawal from occupied Palestinian territory. It does include a clause calling for negotiations and talks about withdrawal, not implementation. This means that the Palestinian Camp David is for negotiations, not implementation.

Al-Hasan stressed that the PLO has not yet made a decision on dealing with the proposed U.S. settlement. He said: We are still studying the U.S. plan to know what is required of us and what we should do. So far, we have not arrived at a decision. He stressed that Palestinian leaders are holding lengthy and heady debates about the proposed plan in view of its serious effect on the Palestine question.

Al-Hasan warned against adopting a Palestinian decision favorable to the plan as it is currently proposed, adding: Palestinian political decisionmaking is very important in this phase. The future of the intifadah, which would be the first victim of the Bush-Baker-Shamir plan, is contingent on this decisionmaking.

Al-Hasan criticized what is being said regarding the need to make a Palestinian decision endorsing participation in the peace process while keeping the intifadah going at the same time, saying: Dissociating participation in the peace conference from the intifadah is a figment of the imagination. This is because the conference will demand a halt to intifadah activities in the first session. If we were to reject such a demand, we would then be confronted by a world campaign, and consequently, we would be the losers. If we accept being partners in one way or another in the peace conference, we have to commit ourselves to the implementation of its decisions. He affirmed: The intifadah is the dearest thing that we have. Despite the fact that four years have elapsed since the start of the intifadah, and regardless of the positive and negative aspects of the intifadah, the intifadah fiber has remained intact. Likewise, the Palestinian infrastructure is still there. As for the intifadah, it is continuing and escalating.

The PLO official went on to say: If the PLO responds favorably to the peace conference idea, this will not reflect positively on the intifadah. He expected the peace conference, if it were to convene, to continue for three years. He said: The conference, due to convene in October, will not be able to achieve anything by the end of December, when the U.S. election process starts. Afterward, there will be Israeli elections. Consequently, there will be no serious progress before 1993.

Al-Hasan said that a firm decision to continue the intifadah until 1993 will create new facts on the Palestinian land—facts that will reflect positively on the Palestinian political position. Similarly, he affirmed that the continuation of the intifadah will produce massacres against the Palestinian people and leaders and cause them to be victimized. He added that the intifadah cannot stand on its feet if erroneous decisions are made. He said that he views himself as one who belongs to the steadfast rather than the liberation generation. Salah al-Din, who conquered Jerusalem, was not born on the first day of the Crusaders' occupation. Likewise, his generation was not the first to clash with the Franks, al-Hasan added.

The PLO official noted: In my 30-year experience in revolutionary action, I learned that history moves forward, and that revolutionaries, at junctures, can make it forge ahead in the paths they choose.

Concluding his statements, he affirmed that he does not belong to the extremist school of rejectionism.

'Arafat Speech to UN Nongovernmental Bodies

JN2808200191 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1600 GMT 28 Aug 91

["Text" of speech by PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat, identified by his nom de guerre Abu-'Ammar, to the opening session of the eighth UN conference for nongovernmental organizations on the question of Palestine, in Vienna; date not given—announcer-read]

[Text] Mrs. (Absat Claude Dialo), head of the committee on the Palestinian people's right to practice their inalienable rights; the head of the eighth UN conference of nongovernmental organizations on Palestine; the representative of the Austrian Government, Ambassador (Helmut Tork); the representative of the UN secretary general; the head of the committee for international coordination for nongovernmental organizations on the Palestine question; dear friends, brothers, and sisters attending the conference; greetings to you:

On the occasion of the eighth UN conference for nongovernmental organizations on the Palestine question, I would like to convey to you all warmest greetings on behalf of our Palestinian people and of my brothers, the members of the PLO Executive Committee, and in my own name. I would also like to express to you our gratitude and appreciation for your valuable efforts in support of our people's just struggle to find a fair and peaceful settlement to the conflict in the region based on an end to the Israeli occupation through the withdrawal of the occupation troops from our territories and the granting of their inalienable national rights to our people. These are the rights the United Nations and the international community have approved, including their right to freedom, independence, and sovereignty.

I also take opportunity on this auspicious occasion to express to friendly Austria—president, government, and people—our Palestinian people's appreciation and gratitude for Austria's support and backing for justice and fairness and our people's struggle to establish a just peace. I also thank Austria for hosting your esteemed conference. We also express our thanks and gratitude to his excellency UN Secretary General Javier Perez De Cuellar for all his efforts in support of the victory of international legitimacy and the UN resolutions, foremost of which are those that constitute international legitimacy for the Palestine question in finding a just solution based on UN resolutions on the issue. We have often expressed our approval and acceptance of these resolutions.

I would also like to thank Mrs. (Absat Claude Dialo) for running the committee of the Palestinian people's right to practice their inalienable rights and the committee's efforts and effective steps to spread the facts about the justice of our cause. I also thank the Palestine section at the United Nations for the efforts they are making on this issue.

As for you, my friends the nongovernmental organizations, you constitute the essential force of world public opinion in support of the just struggle of the Palestinian people under the leadership of the PLO, their sole legitimate representative, and their blessed intifadah to end the Israeli occupation through the withdrawal of the occupation troops and the retrieval of the inalienable national rights of our people, especially their right to repatriation and self-determination. We express our thanks and appreciation for your important efforts and continuous action inside and outside our occupied homeland in support of our Palestinian people to confront and overcome the difficulties resulting from the continuing Israeli occupation of their territories and their presence in an alien land outside their own homeland.

Dear friends, we now live in a world of radical change. Events in this world are accelerating at record and unprecedented speed. We have witnessed positive developments that revive our hopes of entering a new, stable, and calm world in which human rights are safeguarded and where justice is the basis for relations. On the other hand, we have witnessed developments of a different nature that have made us feel worried and afraid for our present and future. The growing international push to end the cold war was a source of hope. The Gulf war circumstances were a source of fear and worry. The situation in our region is the same as it was before: continuing deterioration, absence of objective efforts to achieve a just solution, and growing tragedy in and around Palestine.

The new world being talked about—considering the serious attempts to depict it as a tangible reality—can never see daylight without resting on solid moral bases, justice, and international legitimacy. To negate or belittle the weight of these bases in founding this new world means that we are practicing the most dangerous deception in terms of values. It also means that we are brushing aside all past lessons and experiences, and putting our feet, wittingly or not, on the road to more disasters and dangers.

Therefore, I reiterate in the name of the Palestinian people, who have the most mature democratic and civilized experience in our region, our support for all moral and creative ideas that truly aim at establishing a new world order built on justice, human rights, and international legitimacy. I reiterate our commitment to working with all sincere forces in our world to achieve this objective.

We were pleased with the huge success of the promising democratic experiment in the friendly USSR and with the country's prompt success in overcoming the dangerous situation afflicting the vast Soviet homeland. We hope that we will hear about cosmic successes when the constructive peaceful concepts of international relations become a concrete reality, given that Soviet friend Mikhail Gorbachev was one of their staunch proponents.

Dear brothers, friends: Your esteemed conference convenes so that you can review achievements in your solidarity with the just struggle of our people, and that you may discuss the appropriate means to enhance your support.

We are confident that you will review your work positively, and that you will reach positive results to find new horizons through which you will renew your constant, principled, concrete support for our people inside and outside our occupied territory, Palestine, including Jerusalem. This support is very important at this critical time our Palestinian people are going through. For they are experiencing tragic circumstances in the occupied territories, especially in the Gaza Strip, which is actually starving, and in the occupied West Bank, which is suffering economic disaster. All this is the outcome of the iron-fist policy, including the economic siege imposed by the occupying authorities—the Israeli occupation authorities—on the Palestinian territories so as to strike at the Palestinian intifadah and break the spirit of resistance of the Palestinian people.

In Kuwait, our people are suffering from crimes committed against them. These crimes have been confirmed by reports from international human rights organizations, including American organizations, in such a way that the Kuwaiti Government cannot deny them, for example the massacring of our people and the existence of mass graves. These crimes against our people are being committed in public before the alliance forces in Kuwait. The alliance forces, therefore, bear the political, military, moral, and actual responsibility to provide security and protection for our people from these crimes. To this add the risk of deportation that our people face to get them out of Kuwait, taking into account the new social, economic, and psychological tragedy the process implies. This deportation will be for the majority the fourth such since 1948, the year of the Palestinian setback.

As for the situation of our people in southern Lebanon camps, it is also not less serious, because after we had facilitated the deployment of the Lebanese Army in the south and presented our weapons as a gift to the Lebanese Army, we see that these camps are still under siege. The international family, the United Nations, and all the countries and forces that advocate democracy and human rights bear a political and moral responsibility to protect our Palestinian people, ease their suffering, and protect them. The best and shortest means to do this is to put an end to the Israeli occupation of Arab territories, including Jerusalem, through the withdrawal of the Israeli occupation forces from these territories. Our people will then be able to exercise their right to self-determination, freedom, and sovereignty over their lands.

To achieve this, I call upon you and the United Nations to work for the implementation of UN Security Council

681 on the protection of the Palestinian people and the implementation of the Geneva conventions on the occupied Palestinian territory.

Sisters and brothers, we all hope that you will be able to reaffirm your commitment to work toward the attainment of this noble objective.

Sisters, brothers, and friends, you are holding your esteemed conference under the canopy of the major changes and developments in the region, and the accelerating moves the U.S. Administration is undertaking to conduct negotiations and convene a peace conference in the region between Israel and the Arab countries. I would like here to explain to you our viewpoint on these moves. The U.S. Administration has outlined the course of its steps through a policy which it calls two-track. The first track deals with the normalization of Arab-Israeli relations. This has actually started even before the convening of the conference and the initiation of the negotiations, and without using this normalization as a weapon to obtain guarantees on Arab and Palestinian rights, on the Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories, or on Jerusalem and Palestinian representation. The second track in our opinion tackles the Palestinian cause in form only as it seeks to secure a Palestinian cover to peddle the first track. This track seeks to completely exclude the PLO, our people's legitimate and sole representative, from the settlement process and to bring the Palestinian people into the maze of unequal negotiations leading to so-called autonomy rule. You are well aware that such a proposal does not comprise the termination of the Israeli occupation and the withdrawal of the Israeli forces of occupation in accordance with the UN resolutions, particularly Resolution 242. This concept allows only for self-administration, or autonomy rule, and legitimizes the Israeli occupation for the duration of time it needs. The U.S. Administration has set this period at five years; two for negotiations and three for self-administration. This means that the Israeli occupation authorities will have the time they need to swallow and Judaize the land, and to establish settlements for the large number of new Jewish immigrants with the purpose of establishing Greater Israel.

The current proposal by the U.S. Administration also comprises two other subjects of major importance. The first is the issue of Jerusalem. The U.S. Administration is placating Israel, the occupation authority, by supporting its insistence on excluding the issue of Jerusalem in terms of cause, representation, and content from the settlement. In our opinion, this constitutes submission to Israeli blackmail with its threats to refuse to participate in the negotiations. This also constitutes submission to Israeli policies and conditions on Jerusalem, its annexation and Judaization, and the expulsion of its inhabitants, not to mention the confiscation of its lands and the violation of Islamic and Christian holy places.

It is no secret to you that the Israeli Government's insistence in excluding Jerusalem is a feverish attempt to determine the status of Jerusalem even before the conference convenes, or even before the intiation of the peace process. Of course, this conflicts with UN resolutions, Geneva conventions, and international legitimacy on Jerusalem and the territories under occupation.

The second subject is Palestinian representation or the current attempts to cancel, postpone, combine it with other joint delegations, or overlook it. It is no secret to you that these attempts deprive the PLO, the Palestinian people's sole legitimate representative, of its right to represent its people at the proposed conference. This is unacceptable and severe interference in a purely Palestinian affair, an interference unprecedented in the history of negotiations among disputing parties.

These moves and steps constitute an attempt to subjugate international legitimacy to the will of the Israeli Government. They also conflict with all the UN resolutions and the will of the international family, which believes that these international resolutions must be a good basis for the desired just settlement.

O sisters and brothers, despite all this, the PLO responded, as you know, to all the peaceful endeavors and efforts to reach a just solution to the dispute, including the principles announced by President Bush on 6 March 1990, and earlier Baker's five points and Egypt's 10 points. Within this context, we asked our brothers in the occupied territories to facilitate the mission of the foreign minister.

The PLO officially announced that it welcomed in principle the recent call issued at the American-Soviet summit in Moscow for a special conference on Middle East peace. Out of our eagerness to secure the convening and success of the conference, we stress in front of you what we announced to all countries involved in finding a just settlement of the Middle East problem. The following bases should be provided for the success of the conference:

1. Recognizing the legitimate political and national rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination.

2. Agreeing that Palestinian participation should take place in accordance with the PLO's decision and any foreign interference in this issue should be rejected.

3. Rejecting the exclusion of the issue of Jerusalem as a cause to be represented, at any stage of the peace process.

4. Suspending immediately the settlement process in all the occupied territories, especially in Jerusalem, and providing international protection for the Palestinian people.

O sisters and brothers, we reiterate that we are firmly bent on achieving a just, comprehensive settlement of the region's dispute so that we can establish peace in the land of peace, blessed Palestine, which has been a symbol of coexistence, love, and tolerance over the ages and

which was the cradle of three religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Please allow me to greet the brothers and sisters—the Jewish forces supporting peace in the world and in Israel, which are working to find a just and lasting solution by establishing this just peace. They are doing this despite the difficulties they are facing.

Out of our eagerness to achieve that peace, the Palestine National Council issued a Palestinian peace initiative on 15 November 1980. I announced that initiative in Geneva that same year. We stress before you that we still believe in this initiative, that we are committed to this initiative and to international legitimacy and its resolutions, and that we will continue to work to achieve the desired just peace. Therefore, I invite Israel's leaders, as I have done in the past, to the peace of the courageous. I repeat my call for making the peace of the courageous under the auspices of the United Nations. We still believe that the best way to do this is to convene a UN-sponsored international conference on Middle East peace to be attended by the five permanent members of the Security Council and the other states involved in the dispute in the region, including the PLO and the Israeli Government on an equal footing.

Nevertheless, we have welcomed other initiatives out of our desire to advance the peace process in order to end the Israeli occupation of our land through the withdrawal of the occupation forces, and to enable our people to regain and exercise their inalienable national rights. Without an end to this occupation, it is difficult to imagine the possibility of achieving a just, lasting, and comprehensive peace in the region. We address you and we are confident that you will support us and will make every possible effort to help our people in implementation of Resolution No. 681 to end their suffering and tragedy and to achieve just peace in the region. I thank you and wish your conference continued success. It is a revolution until victory.

'Arafat Writes to UN Refugee Commissioner

PM2908145691 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 24-25 Aug 91 p 5

["Text" of PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat undated message to Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, UN commissioner for refugee affairs]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.

"Glory to God who did take his servant for a journey by night from the Sacred Mosque to the Farthest Mosque, whose precincts We did bless, in order that We might show him some of Our signs: for He is the one who heareth and seeth (all things). [Koranic verse] God verily said the truth.

Your Highness Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan,

Blessed greetings,

I write this urgent message to you in view of all these major and serious developments and changes surrounding Holy Jerusalem, our Palestinian people's cause, and the Arab and Islamic nation. bOur region is now witnessing rapid moves and steps by the United States, which has defined a twin-track direction for them. Their danger is clear and conspicuous in its dealings with the Arabs and Muslims and their central cause, the Palestinian cause, under the so-called current settlement steps.

The programmed scheme aims first to normalize Arab-Israeli relations and to perpetuate the status quo through agreements that give Israel what it wants at the expense of the Palestinian people, their cause, and their holy places, our Islamic nation's holy places. It also aims to secure a Palestinian cover with a view to implementing the peace process and driving us into the labyrinths of unequal negotiations on so-called self-administration. This conflicts with international legitimacy and its resolutions; grants legitimacy to the Israeli occupation and the period it requires; and enables it to continue its plans to swallow up and confiscate the land, set up settlements on it, and Judaize it in order to settle the new Jewish emigrants on it with the aim of establishing a greater Israel. This scheme also includes eclipsing the issue of Jerusalem and its citizens, by exercising blackmail and the constant Israeli conspiracy against the Islamic and Christian holy places in the holy city, whose land the Zionist continue to confiscate, annex, Judaize, and regard as the capital of the state of greater Israel. It also aims to liquidate the Palestinian issue, eliminate the Palestinian people's existence, and exclude their legitimate representative from the peace conference.

Your Highness, this U.S.-Israeli scheme is directed against our struggling Palestinian Arab people garrisoned on Palestine's blessed territory, their national rights, and our holy places. It is also directed against our Arab and Islamic nation. It concentrates on Judaizing the Islamic and Christian holy places in blessed Palestine and holy Jerusalem.

Our struggling and steadfast people in the land of the nocturnal journey and the midnight journey to the seven heavens are confident that you will stand by them, warning against following that U.S.-backed Israeli scheme, and that you will stand by and protect Jerusalem and protect the Palestinian people and their rights in this difficult and serious situation. Our people hope that you will take practical, tangible, and urgent steps reflecting your humanitarian and religious commitment to the issue of Jerusalem and the other holy places, both Islamic and Christian, in blessed Palestine, and to protecting this nation's security and future. This, because we are all judged by history. It is history that will record points for or against us. I do not think that any of this nation's leaders would agree to history's recording that this nation or its leaders abandoned the first of the two kiblahs and the third holy place, the destination of the

midnight journey of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, and the birthplace of Christ, peace be upon him.

In the name of God the merciful, the compassionate,

"And to enter your mosque, as they entered it before, and to visit with destruction all that fell into their power." [Koranic verse] God verily said the truth.

I thank you on our people's behalf and wish you good health and happiness.

May God's peace, mercy, and blessings be upon you.

With respect to your highness, and together until victory, to Jerusalem in order to pray in the mosque whose precincts God has blessed.

'Arafat Said To Head Delegation to 10 Sep Talks

PM2908113491 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 24 Aug 91 p 3

[Unattributed report: "'Arafat To Head Palestinian Delegation to League Council Meetings in Cairo"]

[Text] Cairo, Tunis, AL-HAYAH—While an informed Palestinian source announced that Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat has been visiting Khartoum since the day before yesterday, Thursday, with a view to holding talks with Sudanese officials on developments in the Middle East, Palestinian sources in Cairo have told AL-HAYAH that 'Arafat will head the PLO delegation to the Arab League ministerial council meeting scheduled to be held in the Egyptian capital 10 September.

The Palestinian sources told AL-HAYAH that the Palestinian delegation to the meeting will work to achieve the aims expressed by Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid. The aims are summed up as the need to "close and unite Arab ranks for the sake of joint Arab action in connection with the issues and challenges facing the Arab nation."

The sources cited the peace conference and said that the league must discuss this matter and an Arab position must be announced on Palestinian representation, East Jerusalem, and Israeli settlements in the occupied territories. They pointed out that the council meeting "will provide an opportunity for consultations on the issues concerning the conference and for tripartite consultations among Egypt, Palestine, Syria, and Jordan."

The sources also said that the PLO's aim in these consultations is "to discuss the formulas for Palestinian participation in the peace conference and to present the Jerusalem issue for endorsement, at both the Palestinian and the Arab levels, in order to guarantee implementation of the resolutions of international legitimacy, and especially Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338."

At the same time extensive efforts are being made by Arab capitals to arrange a private visit for Palestinian President 'Arafat to Cairo and to arrange a meeting between him and Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa during his stopover at the Egyptian capital's airport while en route to Jordan from Tunisia shortly.

Informed sources emphasized that this meeting will broach coordination and consultation between Egypt and the PLO in order to overcome the obstacles to the peace process and to agree on joint foundations among the Arab parties concerned in order to make the moves before and during the conference within the framework of bolstering the Arab position.

Moscow Visit Postponed Due to Events in USSR

TA3008114491 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 29 Aug 91 p 3

[Text] Jerusalem—The Soviet Government decided to postpone a visit by a delegation of West Bank and Gaza Strip figures to Moscow to an undetermined date. The delegation's visit had been scheduled to begin on 2 September.

The visit was postponed upon the request of the Palestinian delegation's members due to the events in the Soviet Union. The delegation was to include Faysal al-Husayni, Radwan Abu-'Ayyash, Dr. Riyad al-Maliki, Dr. Zakariyya al-Agha, Ghassan al-Khatib, Zuhayra Kamal, Dr. Muhammad Jadallah, and Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat.

PLO Demands Saudi Arabia Return Wages

JN3008060091 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 30 Aug 91 p 1

[By 'Awdah 'Awdah]

[Text] The PLO is demanding that the Saudi Government pay back $170 million withheld from Palestinians working in Saudi Arabia.

A responsible Palestinian source told AL-RA'Y that the Palestine National Fund stopped receiving these deductions at the beginning of the Gulf crisis in August 1990 as one of many forms of pressure placed on the PLO and the Palestinian people.

The money is a trust held by the Saudi Treasury and must not be transferred to any third party, the source said, stressing that a large part of the sum was funneled to the Afghan mujahidin, among others.

The source said that levying these funds from Palestinians was decided upon during several Arab summits, including the 1974 summit in Rabat. Holding these funds in the Saudi Treasury has had negative effects on the Palestinian intifadah, the source said, explaining that compensation payments for families of martyrs, wounded, detainees, and owners of demolished houses were reduced by 30 percent. Compensation for services

provided by the Palestinian Red Crescent and the educational and economic institutions in occupied Palestine were also reduced by the same amount, the source said.

The source stressed that Jerusalem teachers, who receive their salaries from the Palestine National Fund, have not received their salaries for July and August because of the financial deficit.

Hamas Official Says No Agreement on PNC

JN2908113291 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 29-30 Aug 91 p 2

[By JORDAN TIMES staff reporter P.V. Vivekanand]

[Text] Amman—Two days of discussions between the Palestinian mainstream leadership and Muslim fundamentalists have not produced agreement on key disputes over the composition of the Palestine National Council (PNC), but both sides have agreed to continue contacts, representatives from the two sides said Wednesday.

Ibrahim Ghawshah, who led the fundamentalist Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) delegation to the talks held Monday and Tuesday, said there was no shift in the Hamas' demand for either 40 per cent of all seats in the PNC, the Palestinian policy-making body, or for United Nations-supervised elections to the council from among Palestinians living inside and outside the occupied territories.

"We have no intention to shift from these two basic demands," Mr. Ghawshah told the JORDAN TIMES. "The Islamic movement is strong enough to substantiate this position," he said.

"They (the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organisation—PLO) have the choice; they can either give Hamas a minimum of 40 per cent of seats in the PNC or agree to hold elections to the council among the six million Palestinians both outside and inside" the occupied territories, said Mr. Ghawshah, the Amman representative of the Gaza-based Hamas.

"We agreed to keep all doors open for further discussions and will continue efforts to reach agreement," he added.

Mr. Ghawshah's comments implied that Hamas might be dropping one of its previous demands; that the PLO drop its peace strategy adopted at the 1988 session of the PNC.

"The Islamic movement will definitely win a majority of PNC seats if elections were held today," he asserted. "This will give us enough influence to reverse any previous decision taken by the PNC," he said.

Hamas is an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood, the dominant political force in the occupied Gaza Strip, where over 70 per cent of residents are refugees from pre-1948 Palestine for whom any hypothetical peace settlement involving only the Gaza Strip and the West Bank will not mean much.

Most analysts believe that this realisation is behind most Gazans rallying behind the Muslim Brotherhood, which is calling for the liberation of "all of Palestine."

Recent elections for local organisations in the West Bank have also underlined the growing strength of the fundamentalists in the territory, traditionally a bastion of Palestinian nationalism represented by the PLO rather than religious ideology. Taysir 'Aruri, a member of the Palestinian Communist Party who was among the PLO delegation attending this week's talks in Amman, indicated that the mainstream leadership was ruling out meeting the Hamas demands but believed that common groups [as published] could be found with the fundamentalist group if only for the sake of Palestinian unity against the backdrop of the American-led efforts to convene Arab-Israeli peace talks.

Abu 'Ali Mustafa, [Mustafa al-Zibri] who represents the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine in the PLO Executive Committee, headed the PLO team to this week's talks with Hamas. Others in the team included Saji Salamah and Salih Ra'fat of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine and Hani al-Hasan, a political advisor to PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat.

"What is important at this crucial stage in the Palestinian struggle is unity among ourselves and this remains our objective throughout all contacts with our brothers in the Islamic movements," Mr. 'Aruri said.

According to Mr. 'Aruri, "most members of the PNC are elected officials of the various popular and professional Palestinian movements" and therefore the PLO leadership does not see any need for fresh elections to the council.

PLO Executive Committee member Muhammad Milhim has said that the organisation was willing to accept elections to the PNC if Israel permitted the process. "If any party can convince Israel to hold such elections it is more than welcome," Mr. Milhim has said.

'Aruri said he did not believe that a PNC session scheduled to be held in Algiers on Sept. 20 hinged on an agreement between the PLO leadership and Hamas. "It could be delayed for a few days, but no postponement can be expected," he said.

Independent Palestinian sources speculated that the PLO leadership might go ahead and convene the council without Hamas if no agreement was reached, but will keep the door open by issuing an invitation for the fundamentalists.

However, said a well-informed independent source, difficulties with Hamas are not the main problem faced by the PLO to convene the PNC.

"The entire Palestine liberation movement is at a crossroads and the PNC has to come with definite decisions on (the American-led) peace process as and when it is convened," noted the source.

Senior PLO officials, including Executive Committee members, have said that the leadership was in favour of referring the entire issue of the proposed Mideast conference in October and Palestinian participation in the parley to the PNC. The PLO is seeking basic guarantees from the United States that Israel will withdraw from all Arab territories occupied in the 1967 war and will freeze all settlement activities in the occupied territories.

"There cannot be any ambiguity over any decision taken by the PNC over the peace process as and when the council is convened," noted the independent source. "Proper ground has to be laid before holding a PNC session, and the sheer complexity of the issues involved does not make it any easier for the PLO leadership," added the source.

Egypt

Cairo: Iraqi Landing on Bubiyan 'Irresponsible'

NC2908124891 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1150 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Excerpt] Cairo, 29 Aug (MENA)—An Egyptian Foreign Ministry spokesman today said that Egypt expresses its deep concern over reports that Iraqi troops and gunboats have violated Kuwaiti waters and landed personnel and weapons on the Kuwaiti island of "Bubiyan."

In the statement, the Egyptian Foreign Ministry spokesman said this "irresponsible Iraqi conduct is bound to further complicate the situation."

The spokesman added that the Iraqi conduct once more proves the aggressive intentions of the Iraqi regime. This, he said, may lead to repercussions which might add to what the Arab nation, particularly the Iraqi and Kuwaiti people, have already suffered. The Iraqi measure is a violation of UN Security Council resolutions and Arab and international legitimacy, he added.

The spokesman said Egypt appeals to the Iraqi regime to abandon such practices, which threaten security in the Gulf and the entire Arab world, and to resort to "peaceful means" in its dealings.

The Foreign Ministry spokesman emphasized the importance of holding necessary consultations within the framework of the "Damascus Declaration," which was signed by Egypt, Syria, and the six states of the Gulf Cooperation Council. [passage omitted]

Mubarak Returns Home From Libya 29 Aug

NC3008064291 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0400 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] President Husni Mubarak returned to Cairo from Banghazi early this morning after attending Libya's inauguration celebration of the first stage of the Great Manmade River. During his stay in Libya, President Mubarak held talks with brother Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the Libyan revolution, on bilateral ties, the Middle East, and other issues of common concern. Mubarak also received a number of leaders and heads of delegations who attended the ceremony and discussed bilateral ties and current international issues. Mubarak was received at Cairo airport by a number of senior civilian and military officials.

Foreign Minister Receives PLO Delegation

NC2908084391 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0717 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] Cairo, 29 Aug (MENA)—This morning Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa met with a Palestinian delegation led by PLO Executive Committee member Mahmud 'Abbas, alias, Abu-Mazin. Palestinian Ambassador in Cairo Sa'id Kamal and Fatah representative in Cairo Zuhdi al-Qidrah also attended the meeting. The participants discussed the outcome of the talks Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat held in Jordan on the formation of a Palestinian delegation to the peace conference, which is scheduled to convene in October. Other issues discussed included Middle East developments and the efforts being made to achieve peace and find a permanent and just solution to the Middle East problem.

Libya

Qabus Message Delivered to al-Qadhdhafi

JN2808142191 Muscat Radio Oman Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 28 Aug 91

[Text] Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, president of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah, received a written message from His Majesty Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id in response to his excellency's message, delivered by Colonel Mustafa al-Kharrubi, the general inspector of the Libyan Arab Armed Forces, during his recent visit to the Sultanate.

The message was delivered by Khalfan Bin-Nasir al-Wahaybi, minister of electricity and water, when the Libyan president received him today. The minister also conveyed his majesty the sultan's greetings to his excellency the Libyan president and congratulations on the completion of the first stage of the manmade river project and the 22nd anniversary of the Libyan Revolution. The meeting also dealt with relations between the two fraternal countries in specific, and inter-Arab relations in general.

Further on Mubarak Meeting 'Arafat, al-Bashir

JN2908152191 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Mustafa Bakri dispatch from Banghazi]

[Text] Heads of Arab and foreign delegations participating in celebrations to inaugurate the Great Manmade River in Banghazi began to leave the Libyan Jamahiriyah today following a series of important meetings held on the sidelines of the celebrations.

The most important meetings were President Mubarak's meeting with Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat, and the tripartite summit that included the Egyptian, Libyan, and Sudanese leaders.

Informed diplomatic sources stressed to our radio that the Mubarak-'Arafat meeting discussed more than one important issue, foremost of which were the basis for convening a peace conference and the issue of Palestinian representation in this conference. In addition, they discussed the possibility of holding a mini Arab summit to include the leaders of the Arab states that are parties to conflict with Israel.

During his meeting with 'Arafat, the Egyptian president reiterated Egypt's firm stand toward the Arab character of Jerusalem and the PLO's right to appoint its representatives to the negotiations, in addition to Egypt's adherence to the need of implementing the UN Security Council resolutions, particularly Resolutions 242 and 338.

The Palestinian president stressed to our radio the positiveness of the meeting with President Mubarak, noting that the future stage will witness further coordination contacts on the basis of a just peace in the region.

The sources said that the meeting between Presidents Mubarak and al-Bashir, in the presence of Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi discussed efforts to clear the air between Egypt and Sudan. The Egyptians and Sudanese clearly and frankly discussed all unresolved problems between, including the Sudanese Islamic Front's position toward Egypt, the issue of preventing some arrivals from entering either country, and Egypt's position, on which al-Bashir said that it supports the Sudanese opposition that will make Cairo its headquarters.

According to the sources, the two sides agreed to continue discussion to clear the air and to promote relations between the two countries.

'Exemplary' Ties With Egypt Discussed

PM2908154091 London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic 30 Aug 91 p 24

[Report on interview with Ahmad Qadhdhaf-al-Damm, Libyan coordinator of Egyptian-Libyan relations, by Usamah 'Ajjaj in Cairo; date not given]

[Excerpts] It would be a mistake for anyone to believe that the Egyptian Council of Ministers' recent decision—in response to directives from President Muhammad Husni Mubarak following the meeting in Tripoli with Col. Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the Libyan revolution—to open the borders between Egypt and Libya came a surprise to those who closely followed the course of the special relations between the countries. At the first meeting held on the sidelines of the 1989 Casablanca Arab summit, said Ahmad Qadhdhaf-al-Damm, coordinator of Egyptian-Libyan relations, an in-depth dialogue took place between leaders Mubarak and Al-Qadhdhafi during which the foundations were laid for a strategic agreement designed to serve the Arab nation's aims. On that day an important fact was confirmed, namely, that there have been no disagreements in the past, in the lean years, or any border or economic problems. If there was disagreement, it was over pan-Arab issues, which necessitate different views, not estrangement. This is why it was agreed to open offices for cooperation between the two countries. And an agreement was reached on working steps and planned programs, taking account of the various changes taking place in the Arab region and on the international scene. It was an agreement to contain and eliminate any points of disagreement and to bolster the points of agreement. Unknown soldiers worked quietly to bolster the action and cooperation march between the two countries. We were in a race against time until we achieved what we are experiencing now. It is the will of the masses and the people. [passage omitted]

With regard to the impact of the two countries' differing political systems on any unity plan between them, Ahmad Qadhdhaf-al-Damm emphasized to AL-HAWADITH that "such differences exists only among some of the sick forces which are trying to hit this important step. We are a jamahiriyah which is willing to make numerous material and moral sacrifices for the sake of achieving unity. Libya has a small population and it is a rich oil-producing state. If it was a state ruled by a ruler who seeks only his own stability and security, he would have turned his back on all the Arabs and their problems. But we seek unity with them, and this is the decision of the Libyans, who sat in the people's congresses and decided to destroy the borders. This is why we do not recognize any borders with Tunisia, Algeria, Sudan, or Egypt. And I believe that Libya's entry into the jamahiriyah stage advances the state of a total merger with any Arab state. We do not have a leader who seeks power, nor do we have party struggle.

As a result of his step and the recent decision to destroy the illusory borders between so-called Egypt and Libya, the coordinator of Egyptian-Libyan relations said in his interview with AL-HAWADITH, President Husni Mubarak now enjoys unusual respect, and his popularity has increased substantially in the jamahiriyah and the Arab homeland, because he unhesitantly adhered to the people's will, expressed their feelings, and broke the barrier of hesitation. By so doing he responded to what the leader of the revolution, Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, did last Ramadan, as they have together ended a miserable and embarrassing phase in the Arab people's history. We are another example of cooperation: a small state and a large state removing the borders between them, not fighting over borders, as happens between some Arab countries. We now provide to all the Arab states a brilliant example of Arab-Arab cooperation—and an example to be followed. [passage omitted]

Tunisia

President Receives Kuwaiti Amir's Envoy

LD2508051791 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 24 Aug 91

[Excerpts] President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali received this morning at the presidential palace in Carthage Nasir Al-Ridan, Kuwait's Finance Minister and special envoy of Kuwaiti Amir Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah to the president. The Kuwaiti envoy made a statement following the meeting in which he said that he had the honor of meeting the president and that he delivered to him a written message from His Highness Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah concerning bilateral relations and implementation of the UNSC resolutions on Iraq. He said that Kuwait wants the UNSC resolutions relating to

Iraq ending aggressions against it, the release of Kuwaiti prisoners, and demarcation of borders with Iraq implemented. The special envoy pointed out that the meeting with the president was truly good and fruitful; that it will have good results, given President Ben Ali's great role on the Arab and international levels; and that it will also have good results vis-a-vis bilateral relations between Tunisia and Kuwait. [passage omitted]

The official spokesman said the president reiterated that Tunisia will not spare any effort to clear the air among Arab states and to restore Arab solidarity and that it is anxious to strengthen relations of brotherhood and cooperation with Kuwait for the good of the two fraternal countries.

Foreign Minister, UN Envoy Discuss Peace

LD2508050691 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 24 Aug 91

[Text] Within the framework of consultations undertaken by the UN secretary general with a number of member countries concerned with finding a peaceful solution to the Middle East conflict, Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahia today received Edouard Brunner, the UN secretary general's special representative. After reviewing the efforts being made in this direction, Habib Ben Yahia proposed to the UN guest the Tunisian conception of a just and durable peace in the Middle East region, thus revealing the work undertaken by Tunisia for that purpose at all levels, especially within the core of the Arab Maghreb Union. The foreign minister also drew his interlocutor's attention to the human side in the tragedy of the Palestinian people, especially the deterioration in their living conditions in the occupied territories. Edouard Brunner, in his turn, expressed satisfaction at Tunisia's intention to contribute positively to the peace march and hoped that all its requirements will be obtained over the next few weeks in conditions acceptable to all. The UN secretary general's representative added that all the conditions laid down by this or that party must be provided so that sitting at the negotiating table may take place.

*Jebali, Nuri Questioned

91AA0623A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 24 Aug 91 pp 1,4

[Article by Muhammad 'Ali al-Qulaybi: "In Preparation for Tunisian 'Ennahdha' Movement Trial, Investigation of Jebali and Nuri"]

[Text] Tunis—AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned that the military examining magistrate in Tunis began questioning Hamadi Jebali, one of the principal leaders of the Ennahdha Islamist movement in the case known as the attempt to overthrow the government. Hamadi Jebali, the former secretary general of the Ennahdha Movement and director of the movement's mouthpiece AL-FAJR, will be linked for the first time to the group charged with preparing to overthrow the government.

Last January, Jebali was sentenced to six months in prison for publishing an article written by Tunisian lawyer Muhammad Nuri in AL-FAJR criticizing the military court, considering it incompatible with the constitution. Nuri also called for the court's elimination and this, in particular, is what the judicial authorities considered slander against one of its agencies.

Observers think it likely that the decision to hold a hearing will include the remaining leaders in the Ennahdha Movement who were arrested in December 1990; the most important of these is Ali Laaridh, who was recently subjected to a scathing press campaign.

On Wednesday, 21 August, Muhammad Nuri was referred to the military examining magistrate for investigation under the charge of participating in the attempt to overthrow the government.

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned that one of the principal accusees mentioned Muhammad Nuri's name during questioning as one of the participants in the Ennahdha Movement's secret conference in 1988.

One of the lawyers who was attending the hearing of Muhammad Nuri told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the military examining magistrate decided to postpone the hearing until 26 August on the basis of a request from the defense.

It appears, according to several informed sources, that the investigations and inquiries have revealed new leads in the dossier of the attempt to overthrow the government in Tunis. Therefore, it would be better not to start the trial until the second half of September.

Kuwait

Sources Cited on Clash With Iraqi Patrol Boats

NC2908202891 Paris AFP in English 2003 GMT 29 Aug 91

[By Michel Moutot]

[Excerpt] Kuwait City, Aug 29 (AFP)—Forty-five would-be Iraqi infiltrators caught Wednesday off Kuwait's Bubiyan Island were trying to retrieve weapons seized by the Kuwaiti Army, Western sources here said Thursday.

Earlier, a senior Kuwaiti official said Iraqi gunboats tried to seize Bubiyan but were repelled by Kuwaiti forces.

Five vessels full of arms and ammunition were stopped and boarded by Kuwaiti coast guards as they were leaving the island en route back to Iraq, a Western source said.

He reported an exchange of fire at Ra's al-Qayd, about three kilometers (1.8 miles) beyond the demilitarized zone controlled by United Nations forces.

The desert island of Bubiyan north of Kuwait is separated from Iraq by a narrow stretch of water and had been heavily fortified by the Iraqi Army during seven months of occupation of the emirate.

It may still conceal large quantities of weapons left behind by retreating Iraqi soldiers during Operation Desert Storm.

Several Iraqi patrol boats tried to intervene to rescue the other vessels, the source said.

The Kuwaiti Army then called on the air force which scambled several A4 Skyhawks, a Western diplomat said. At least one patrol boat was sunk and three seized by the Kuwaiti Army, he said.

On Thursday Public Works Minister 'Abdallah al-Qutami said seven Iraqi landing vessels had been destroyed and five others chased away.

But Iraq denied the charges as "pure lies" and said its forces had not approached the island.

"The Iraqis, backed by gunboats from al-Faw (southern Iraq), used heavy weapons in their assault on the island," the minister had said.

A statement from U.N. observers in the region said the United Nations had been told by the Kuwaiti liaison office of clashes at Ra's al-Qayd and that an Iraqi helicopter which tried to take off was disssuaded by the Kuwaiti air force, which threatened to shoot it down.

U.N. observers and a helicopter were dispatched to the zone early Thursday but detected no activity there. They also contacted the Iraqi liaison in the Umm Qasr border area but got no answer.

Western diplomats here said Iraqi elements may have taken the risk of launching such an operation either to retrieve sophisticated weapons or to test the Kuwaiti Army's reaction. [passage omitted]

Saudi Arabia

Iraqi Aggression Against Kuwait Condemned

LD2908221891 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1030 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] Jeddah, 29 Aug (SPA)—The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia expressed sharp criticism and condemnation of the Iraqi regime's new aggression against the territorial waters of the state of sister Kuwait. A number of armed Iraqi boats violated Kuwaiti regional waters and a group of armed people infiltrated the Kuwaiti island of Bubiyan.

That was a statement read by an SPA official, who said: "This aggression is a flagrant transgression of the UN Security Council and Arab League resolutions, a flagrant violation of the cease-fire, and an act of disrespect for international legitimacy. It also reveals the repeated aggressive and expansionist intentions of the Iraqi regime against the State of Kuwait, which could have a direct negative impact on the atmosphere of peace in the region, and led to a new escalation in the situation."

The source ended the statement by saying: "The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as it stands by its sister Kuwait, calls on all sister and friendly peace-loving states to exert their deterring pressure on the Iraqi regime in order to prevent it from repeating such flagrant aggressive actions."

United Arab Emirates

Ministry 'Sharply' Condemns Iraqi Bubiyan Landing

JN3008052591 Manama WAKH in Arabic 2025 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 29 Aug (WAKH)—The United Arab Emirates [UAE] sharply condemned the infiltration by Iraqi regime troops of the territorial waters of the State of Kuwait and the landing by a group of armed men on the Kuwaiti island of Bubiyan.

A Foreign Ministry official said this flagrant and unjust aggression by the Iraqi regime against the State of Kuwait confirms, once again, the continued aggressive intentions of that regime. He said that the UAE urges the Arab League and the international community to decisively face the Iraqi regime's repeated attacks and transgressions.

Yemen

Attacks on Officials Said Due to 'Organized Plan'

PM2908114491 London SAWT AL-KUWAYT AL-DUWALI in Arabic 25 Aug 91 pp 1, 6

[Unattributed report: "Yemeni Regime Begins Physical Liquidation Campaign"]

[Excerpt] Sanaa—In recent months Yemen witnessed a series of liquidations and assassination attempts against prominent figures in the regime which the regime's media organs attributed sometimes to fate and divine decree and often to citizens' mental and psychological disturbance. This was in an attempt to conceal the real motives behind the escalation of violent actions, which have reached the point of physical liquidation. The most recent incident was the attempt to assassinate Ahmad al-Asbahi, the Yemeni president's deputy on the Permanent Committee of the General People's Congress (the ruling party), which was carried out by a General Secretariat employee called Ahmad al-Jabubi at its headquarters in Sanaa last Thursday.

But Yemeni opposition sources believe that the escalation of the violent actions in both the North and the South of Yemen are a natural response to the recent bombardment by the regime's forces of the northern tribes of Wa'ilah, which are currently rising up in protest at the deterioration of economic conditions and the political repression and terror practiced by the regime against citizens from various groups of Yemeni society.

The opposition sources emphasize that the murder of Sa'id Salih Salim, governor of 'Adan City, and Nasr Nasir Yafi'i, economy minister, in two separate car accidents, as the government claimed, took place within the framework of an organized plan to confront the authorities' repression with violence. [passage omitted]

Iranian Envoy Discusses Relations, Invitation

JN2808203991 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 28 Aug 91

[Text] Brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, chairman of the Presidential Council, today received Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Sheykholeslam, who conveyed to the brother president a message from his brother Iranian President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani on the Palestine question and bilateral coordination on issues of interest to our Islamic nation. The message also deals with bilateral relations and areas of cooperation.

The Iranian envoy relayed an invitation to the brother president from his brother President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani to visit Iran.

The two also reviewed brotherly relations and efforts by both countries to consolidate the solidarity and unity of Islamic ranks, so as to enable our Islamic nation to stand up to all challenges.

The brother president gave the Iranian envoy a message to his brother President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, emphasizing our country's eagerness to promote fraternal relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran so as to serve the interests of both people and the objectives of the Islamic nation.

The meeting was attended by Foreign Ministry Under Secretary Ahmad Dayfallah al-'Uzayb and the Iranian ambassador in Sanaa.

Messages Sent on Willingness To Return Kuwaitis

To Arab League Secretary

JN2908121291 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio First Program Network in Arabic 1037 GMT 29 Aug 91

["Text" of message from Foreign Minister Ahmad Husayn to Arab League Secretary General 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid; date not given]

[Text] Your Excellency:

With reference to the message addressed to the UN secretary general from Kuwait's UN permanent representative on 17 July 1991, I have the honor to present to you the information on the situation of the Kuwaiti citizens in Iraq after the Gulf war had ended.

1. The competent Iraqi authorities returned 6,328 Kuwaitis and five non-Kuwaitis to Kuwait under the supervision of the mission of the International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC] as of 4 March until now.

2. The ICRC mission registered 3,400 Kuwaitis, making 606 families present inside Iraq, in addition to 159 individuals.

3. The Kuwaiti side agreed on repatriating 170 Kuwaitis from those mentioned in Paragraph 2. The Kuwaiti side is trying to delude Arab and world public opinion into believing that Iraq is hiding large numbers of Kuwaitis.

4. The Kuwaiti authorities continuously try to obstruct the return of the Kuwaitis to Kuwait on the pretext that they have not completed the checking procedures. The Kuwaiti authorities made some mistakes as acknowledged by the ICRC. The last mistake was on 13 July. On that date, it was decided to hand over a group of Kuwaitis; the representative of Kuwait, however, did not come to 'Ar'ar in Saudi Arabia to receive them. The repatriation was delayed to 14 July. This is despite the fact that the ICRC mission affirmed that it had informed the Kuwaiti side of the date of repatriation.

We believe that the delay in returning the Kuwaitis still in Iraq, who are there with the knowledge of the ICRC, was directly caused by the Kuwaiti authorities, who are fully responsible for this. Iraq has fully cooperated with the ICRC in this regard. It reiterates its readiness to hand over all Kuwaitis in Iraq to the Kuwaiti side through the ICRC mission.

We urge his excellency the secretary general to put pressure on the Kuwaiti side to receive them and not to use this issue for unfair media purposes.

I ask your excellency to distribute this message to the Arab League member states.

With my respect.

To Perez de Cuellar

JN2908122891 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio First Program Network in Arabic 1040 GMT 29 Aug 91

["Text" of message from Foreign Minister Ahmad Husayn to UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar; date not given]

[Text] Your Excellency:

With reference to the message addressed to the UN secretary general from Kuwait's UN permanent representative on 17 July 1991, I have the honor to present to you the information on the situation of the Kuwaiti citizens in Iraq after the Gulf war ended.

1. The competent Iraqi authorities returned 6,328 Kuwaitis and five non-Kuwaitis to Kuwait under the supervision of the mission of the International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC] as of 4 March until now.

2. The ICRC mission registered 3,400 Kuwaitis, making 606 families present inside Iraq, in addition to 159 individuals.

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We urge his excellency the secretary general to put pressure on the Kuwaiti side to receive them and not to use this issue for unfair media purposes.

I ask your excellency to distribute this message as a UN document.

With my respect.

Al-Faysal Returns From Iran, Comments on Talks

JN2908200591 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1858 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] Baghdad, 29 Aug (INA)—Foreign Ministry Under Secretary Sa'd 'Abd-al-Majid al-Faysal and his delegation returned to Baghdad after a visit to Iran lasting several days. During the visit, the delegation held talks with Iranian officials on several unresolved issues between the two countries.

In a press statement, Sa'd al-Faysal said that the delegation paid a visit to Tehran at the invitation of Iran in order to pursue contacts and discussions on unresolved issues between the two countries, held in abeyance because of the 30-state aggression against Iraq and the chapter of treason and treachery.

He added that the talks were held in an atmosphere of total openness. Both sides explained their positions on all the issues that were taken up in order to establish a solid, strong foundation for good-neighbor relations and lay the foundations for a permanent, comprehensive peace based on the principles of international law, the UN Charter, and respect for sovereignty, independence, and noninterference in internal affairs.

He asserted that Iraq and Iran are two neighborly countries bound by several ties, in addition to their weight in the region and the world. Establishing peace, stability, and cooperation between them after the tragedies of the eight-year war they experienced would have a positive effect on all nations, he said.

Sa'd al-Faysal noted that the Iraqi delegation, which included a number of experts from the Foreign Ministry and other ministries, visited Tehran with an open mind and heart. He pointed out that this visit is a step toward improving and promoting future relations between the two countries and in the interests of their peoples.

He said that the two sides discussed several issues during their meetings, foremost of which were the exchange of prisoners, the search for MIA's, and the return of Iraqi evacuees to their country after the restoration of the normal situation and the termination of the reasons that forced them to go to Iran. He added that the two sides agreed to exchange the dead bodies on both sides, to form a technical committee to search for MIA's under the supervision of the Red Cross, and to exchange lists of dead prisoners in both countries.

He added that the Iraqi delegation convinced the Iranians of the need to assist in the return of Iranian refugees and to offer help to refugees from northern and southern Iraq. He also pointed out that they discussed the 33 Iraqi civilian aircraft being held in Iran. He said that Iraq told the Iranians that it does not object to giving the six Kuwaiti aircraft back to Kuwait under UN supervision.

He said, moreover, that the visit was good and useful and enabled both sides to learn about each other's views on issues of concern. The two parties asserted the need to exchange meetings and visits between officials of the two countries at all levels so as to conduct more discussions and learn about each other's views on issues of mutual concern. This, he added, aims at reaching results awaited by the two peoples, particularly the repatriation of prisoners and the building of confidence and understanding.

Ramadan on Talks With Iran

JN3008075291 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] Iraqi Vice President Taha Yasin Ramadan has expressed hope that the ongoing dialogue between Iraqi and Iranian officials will constitute the first step toward promoting bilateral relations and establishing normal relations between the two neighborly countries. This came to light during an interview with Ramadan, conducted this afternoon by our political affairs correspondent Kassab Samawi, during Mr. Ramadan's stopover at Amman airport on his way home from Libya, where he participated in the inauguration of the great man-made river.

[Begin recording] [Samawi] Sir, Iraq and Iran exchanged many delegations recently with the hope of discussing unresolved problems between the two countries and to reinforce bilateral relations. How far have these talks come?

[Ramadan] So far, we cannot make a full assessment of the results. I believe, however, that this could be the beginning of relations at the level of under secretaries. If we reach serious solutions to the basic problems—which are known problems, particularly the Iraqi prisoners who have been held for many years, and the Iraqi planes, of course—they might be the first step toward raising the level of relations to that of dialogue and direct negotiation. This means normalizing relations and building normal ties between the two neighborly countries. We hope this will be achieved, but we cannot anticipate the results now.

[Samawi] Sir, the UN secretary general called on the Iraqi leadership yesterday to accept the recent Security Council resolution. What is the Iraqi leadership's position on this issue?

[Ramadan] Personally, I say we regret that the UN secretary general, who is supposed to be concerned about countries' independence, has made such an announcement. He knows full well that the essence of this resolution represents interference in Iraq's internal affairs, and this is rejected by every concerned and honest person.

[Samawi] Thank you, sir.

[Ramadan] You are welcome. [end recording]

Message to UN Denies Bubiyan Charges

JN3008111491 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio First Program Network in Arabic 1040 GMT 30 Aug 91

["Text" of message sent to the UN Security Council president from the Iraq's deputy UN permanent representative in New York on 29 August]

[Text] Your Excellency:

At the instructions of my government, and in reference to the allegations of Kuwait's UN permanent representative on 28 August 1991 contained in Security Council Document 22,990D, alleging that members of the Iraqi military infiltrated Bubiyan Island, I would like to note that what was contained in the statement from Kuwait's permanent representative is fabricated and baseless. Iraq adheres to the Security Council resolutions.

The pretexts made by the Kuwaiti authorities are malicious methods aimed at continuing the blockade on Iraq, tightening the grip around its people, and distorting Iraq's full commitment to the Security Council resolutions.

I would also like to note that there are UN observers from both countries who can examine this. The Iraqi Government is ready to cooperate with any investigation commission formed by the Security Council to discover the facts and expose the lies propagated by the Government of Kuwait.

I would appreciate it if you would kindly distribute this message as a Security Council document.

With my appreciation.

Bubiyan Charges Part of New 'Scheme'

JN3008081991 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0730 GMT 30 Aug 91

[Text] Baghdad, 30 Aug (INA)—The newspaper AL-QADISIYAH has said that Kuwaiti allegations of an Iraqi military landing on Bubiyan Island conceal a new chapter in the scheme of the U.S. aggression against Iraq.

In its editorial today, the Defense Ministry's mouthpiece notes that the Kuwaiti rulers' allegations—which U.S. and Western media began to sell very quickly—coincide with the growing U.S. hostility against Iraq and the attempts to impose custodianship on its people, as demonstrated by the recent UN Security Council resolutions, the meeting between Javier Perez de Cuellar and the conspirator Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, and increasing attempts to engender sectarian sedition in Iraq.

The paper believes that in addition to the attempt to pave the way for aggression against Iraq, the Al Sabah family is trying to use the rumor of an Iraqi armed attack on Bubiyan Island to put Kuwait under Washington's protection and keep U.S. forces in the region to secure the interests of that family. It also tries to claim that Iraq is not serious about abiding by the UN resolutions, and that it is trying to violate them.

AL-QADISIYAH refutes allegations about that attack. It says that UN observer troops were close to the area of the alleged incident, and that the command of these troops has not issued any statement on the supposed landing to verify the fabricated Kuwaiti story.

The paper deals with the negative aspects of such an act as far as Iraq is concerned. It says: Such an act would be of no military value to Iraq and would not achieve any political gain. On the contrary, such an act would not be in the interest of Iraq, nor would it be in harmony with its firm position and principled commitments to abide by the UN resolutions.

It also touches on the subject from the military mobilization point of view. It says: It is known that our troops are not conducting any military activities in the area where the Al Sabah government claims there was a landing.

AL-QADISIYAH draws the attention of observers and analysts to the fact that Bubiyan Island has been out of Iraqi control since the 30-state aggression, and that UN observer troops have been on that island since then to supervise the cease-fire.

The paper warns the world community against being deceived by the aggressive intentions and conspiratorial objectives of these claims. It refers in particular to the UN Security Council, and says: The main tasks of the Security Council now seems to be only to issue unfair resolutions against Iraq without any legitimate basis.

On the basis of its view of the existing reality of the Security Council, AL-QADISIYAH does not rule out the possibility that the Kuwaiti allegations would be put on the Council's agenda in the future to justify the continuation of the economic blockade against the Iraqi people.

Official Denies Attack

JN3008102691 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1010 GMT 30 Aug 91

[Text] Cairo, 30 Aug (INA)—Iraq's permanent representative to the Arab League has refuted Kuwaiti allegations of an Iraqi military attack on Bubiyan Island.

Dr. Nabil Najm told Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid that there are no Iraqi forces in the area mentioned in the Kuwaiti allegations.

In a memorandum on the subject, the representative pointed out that a number of international observers are present in the area. He said the claims are meant to mislead Arab and world public opinion, to maintain the presence of foreign forces in the region under the pretext of thwarting an alleged Iraqi threat, and to maintain the economic blockade against the people of Iraq.

Minister Criticizes UN Chief's Remarks

JN2908114091 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio First Program Network in Arabic 1045 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar yesterday said that Iraq has no alternative other than accepting Security Council Resolution 706. He added: Regrettably, I do not see any other option because the resolution is very clear. He expressed belief that the Iraqi Government will ultimately take into consideration the needs of its people, even if this meant sacrifice of sovereignty.

Commenting on these remarks, Culture and Information Minister Hamid Yusuf Hammadi stated the following to INA: We regret that Perez de Cuellar had said this. He is supposed to be the guardian of international sovereignty and law, or at least this is what his title says. The Iraqi Government will ultimately take into consideration the needs of its people even if this means a sacrifice of sovereignty: Can the international organization and its representative degenerate to a level lower than this?

The minister added: We reassure Mr. Perez de Cuellar that if there is any remaining concern about the sovereignty of nations, then the people of Iraq will not sell out their prosperous future for the leftovers of the hateful present, nor will they abandon their sovereignty after all their sacrifices on the altar of freedom and independence.

Mr. Hammadi added: Mr. Perez de Cuellar should remind himself of his position and and the requirments of decency even if this explanation involves only form.

Ramadan Returns From 'Fruitful' Talks in Libya

JN3008101591 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0937 GMT 30 Aug 91

[Text] Baghdad, 30 Aug (INA)—Taha Yasin Ramadan, Revolution Command Council member and vice president, has returned to Baghdad following a three-day visit to Libya.

In a statement to INA, Taha Yasin Ramadan said he visited Libya to convey the congratulations of President Saddam Husayn and the Iraqi people to President Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi and the fraternal Libyan people on the inauguration of the first phase of the great man-made river.

The vice president added that the Libyan president asked him to convey his greetings to President Saddam Husayn, as well as his appreciation for the fact that his excellency has deputized me to participate in the great river celebrations, a fact which embodies the Iraqi leadership's firm stand to join the brothers all over the Arab world in their celebrations of the marches of victory, development, and progress.

Taha Yasin Ramadan praised the good hospitality and care which he and the accompanying delegation received from Libya's leadership and fraternal people, and noted the appreciation, admiration, and pride they hold in great Iraq, under the leadership of President Saddam Husayn, for the stand of challenge and steadfastness it has taken in the face of U.S. arrogance and its Zionist and Atlantic allies.

Taha Yasin Ramadan said his visit to Libya was successful and fruitful. He added that he met with Libyan leaders and many of the heads of states and fraternal and friendly delegations, and briefed them on the dimensions of the unjust 30-state aggression led by the United States, and the destruction it brought upon scientific, service, and development installations in Iraq. He said he also briefed them on the continued blockade against our steadfast people, which aims at starving them and making them face disease and death.

The vice president said he discussed with the heads of states and leaders of the fraternal and friendly delegations the position that has to be taken and the governments' role needed to break the unfair blockade and reject the illegal and inhumane boycott resolutions. He pointed out that the governments' silence over the U.S. Administration's flagrant violation of human rights and international law will encourage it to continue its aggressive policy, which aims to impose hegemony and tutelage.

He added that the heads of state and leaders of the fraternal and friendly delegations have reaffirmed their solidarity with Iraq's leadership and people, and praised their heroic steadfastness and major efforts to rebuild what was destroyed by the U.S., Zionist, and Atlantic enemies of humanity.

The delegation accompanying the vice president included Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf, minister of state for foreign affairs, and a number of other officials.

UN Chief Assailed for Meeting Opposition Figure

JN2908094591 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0730 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Excerpt] Baghdad, 29 Aug (INA)—The Iraqi papers assailed UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar for his persistence in harming Iraq's security, sovereignty, and people.

In their editorials today, the papers strongly criticize the meeting between the UN secretary general and Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, an enemy of the Iraqi Government guided by surrounding countries. This is a strange and astonishing meeting, the first of its kind held by a secretary general.

AL-THAWRAH says Iraqi memory in particular, and Arab memory in general, is full of disgraceful and unfair positions adopted by Perez de Cuellar—positions that greatly harmed the Arab interests, and from which Iraq is still suffering. The paper refers in particular to the UN

chief's stances during the Iraq-Iran war, the epic of the mother of battles, and the subsequent events.

The paper says that the meeting between Perez de Cuellar and Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim in Geneva adds not only a strange and reckless position to those of the UN secretary general, but is exactly similar to those which the U.S. Administration has been adopting toward Iraq since its wicked aggression till today.

It says that this flagrant meeting proves once again that Perez de Cuellar has turned not only into a cheap tool in the hands of the U.S. policy, but also a tool for the Central Intelligence Agency and a window for its malicious purposes and for everything that may hurt Iraq, its sovereignty, and its security.

The paper says that Perez de Cuellar is now implementing the same orders given by Bush and his partisans; namely, to bless, take care of, and create an "Iraqi opposition" receiving instructions, support, and encouragement from countries surrounding Iraq. [passage omitted]

Hammadi Chairs Meeting on Agricultural Campaign

JN2808172891 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio First Program Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 28 Aug 91

[Text] Prime Minister Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi stated that strenuous efforts are necessary to improve agricultural performance in Iraq with a view to attaining higher agricultural production and secure the citizens' food requirements, thus foiling the schemes to starve them through the maintenance of the unjust economic blockade.

Chairing a meeting today attended by Deputy Prime Minister Muhammad Hamzah al-Zubaydi, Agriculture and Irrigation Minister 'Abd-al-Wahhab Mahmud al-Sabbagh, and agricultural specialists, the prime minister said: Among the requirements for a developed agriculture in Iraq during the current phase is the exploitation of the largest possible arable area to achieve the highest production possible and lay the groundwork for scientific agriculture in the country.

The conferees discussed advance preparation of the means needed to make the agricultural campaign for the next winter season a success. It was decided to form a principal committee to be charged with following the campaign chaired by Deputy Prime Minister Muhammad Hamzah al-Zubaydi. Committee members will be Agriculture and Irrigation Minister 'Abd-al-Wahhab Mahmud, the under secretaries of the Ministry of the Interior and of the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, and the directors general at the Ministry of Industry and Minerals, the Ministry of Oil, and the Ministry of Trade who are directly linked to the agricultural campaign. Likewise, it was decided during the meeting to form committees in all Iraqi governorates to be tasked with following the details of the campaign under the chairmanship of the governors. Directors of the agriculture and irrigation branches, officials in charge of peasant societies, and officials in charge of distributing oil products in governorates will be members of these committees. Moreover, the governorate committees will be tasked with expanding field work and follow-up activities to render the campaign a success and market the largest possible amount of agricultural produce.

It was also decided to hold a meeting of all governorate committees in Baghdad to discuss details of the campaign and examine its organizational aspects in order to ensure the realization of the best possible production and vertical and horizontal expansion in the cultivation of various agricultural crops, especially cereals.

The conferees proposed promoting the effectiveness of private sector firms in clearing streams and waterspouts to prepare them to accommodate the water needed for the campaign and to secure other needs, such as seeds; preventive treatment material; agricultural machines, equipment, and tools; spare parts; fuel; and fertilizers. They also appealed to these firms to hold guidance and awareness seminars to urge peasants to contribute effectively in making the campaign a success.

Emphasis was laid on careful follow-up work to implement the Revolution Command Council's decision to expropriate agricultural land whose owners fail to exploit. Precision was also urged in pursuing scientific methods to cultivate arable land with various types of crops suitable to the nature and fertility of the soil.

The chief secretary at the Council of Ministers attended the meeting.

Foreign Minister Leaves for Nonaligned Meeting

JN2908112491 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1032 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] Baghdad, 29 Aug (INA)—Foreign Minister Ahmad Husayn left Baghdad for Accra today at the head of a delegation to participate in the 10th ministerial meeting of the Nonaligned Movement states.

In a predeparture statement to INA, the minister said the Iraqi delegation will effectively participate in discussing the topics presented to the conference, particularly the Palestine question and the Palestinian Arab people's rights under the leadership of the PLO, their sole legitimate representative.

Sharon Said Implementing 'Government's Policy'

TA2908162291 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] Here are some reactions by the political establishment to the Egyptian Foreign Ministry attack on Construction and Housing Minister Ari'el Sharon:

Yosi Ahime'ir, director of the Prime Minister's bureau, said that the Egyptian statement was regrettable. Responding to a question from our party affairs correspondent Shlomo Raz, Mr. Ahime'ir said that Minister Sharon was implementing the government's policy, and anyone who attacked him was criticizing the entire Israeli Government. He pointed out that the settlement issue was not part of this stage of the negotiations, adding that Israel and the United States are trying to resolve the procedural issues in order to start the peace process.

Agriculture Minister Refa'el Eytan also leveled criticism at Egypt and said that it would be better advised to devote its concern to the settling of the refugees in the Sinai Peninsula. Egypt's obsession with the problems of others instead of dealing with its own explains its sorry situation.

Proposed 1992 State Budget Detailed

TA2808095191 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 28 Aug 91 p 9

[Report by Alisa Odenheimer]

[Text] The state budget for 1992, scheduled to be submitted to the cabinet on Sunday, will top the NIS [new Israeli shekels] 90 billion mark, Finance Ministry officials revealed yesterday.

It will include NIS 15b. for immigration and housing, some NIS 3b. more than the government spent this year on these two areas. The budget proposal is based on a deficit of NIS 7.5b., or 5.5 percent of GDP.

Under the proposal, the government will also phase out "exchange-rate insurance," a type of subsidy for exporters, over the next two years. This move is expected to bring with it heavy government-induced devaluations, to compensate exporters for their loss.

A Finance Ministry official explained yesterday that the government is required, according to international agreements, to eliminate the subsidy eventually.

Some of the 3 percent "insurance" will be phased out during the coming year, but the lion's share will be eliminated in 1993. Exchange-rate insurance is intended to compensate exporters for the fact that inflation in this country continually outstrips devaluations.

Finance Ministry officials have kept the plan under wraps, since the logical conclusion that follows from the elimination of the special subsidy is that the government will have to devalue the shekel, to compensate the exporters.

This is especially true in light of the worsening balance of trade that the country has experienced this year.

In other budget-related news yesterday, Finance Ministry officials said that they would ask the cabinet to cut social-welfare spending, if the defense cut does not go through, rather than raise taxes.

They also emphasized the importance of maintaining the budget deficit at a level that is no higher than 5.5 percent.

One senior official said that a high budget deficit will cost the country millions of shekels in interest rates. According to a senior Finance Ministry official, the interest rate offered to all borrowers in Israel—and not just the government—by foreign lenders is proportional to the budget deficit.

"Every additional percentage of deficit will mean an extra percentage of interest," the ministry official noted.

He noted that the government would complete the 1991 year with a budget deficit of 5.5 percent as well, and that the plan is to bring down the deficit to 2.5 percent in 1993, 1.5 percent in 1994 and 0 percent in 1995.

[A similar report by Beni Baraq on page 1 of the MAMON supplement of Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew on 28 August adds: "The Treasury suggests a 4 percent cut in the defense budget—approximately 0.5 billion shekels. Treasury officials estimate that this cut will not affect the efficacy of the defense system. The Treasury hopes to cut a further 0.5 billion shekels by deferring the defense establishment's expenses while at the same time taking long-range defense needs into consideration."]

Moda'i Urges 'Calculated Risk' in Defense Budget

TA2908112691 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1000 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] Finance Minister Yitzhaq Moda'i criticized the chief of staff's assessment that the country's security will be detrimentally affected if the defense establishment does not receive a budget increase. Moda'i said that this was a calculated risk the government would have to take. Our army affairs correspondent 'Ido Baum was at a news conference held by the finance minister this morning.

[Begin recording] [Baum] The state budget is always saddled with special expenditures, Finance Minister Yitzhaq Moda'i said, but this year is really something out of the ordinary. Moda'i was referring to the heavy budgetary constraints caused by immigrant absorption. Moda'i said that the Treasury recommends postponing expenditures in all fields to enable the economy to shoulder the burden. Moda'i noted that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] is asking that 500 million shekels, which were formally earmarked for the salaries, perks, and employment conditions of career soldiers and civilians in the IDF, be transferred to other fields. The finance minister proposed defraying this transferal to the coming years. The IDF will be able to receive this sum in the

future, and even more. Moda'i criticized the uncompromising nature of the defense establishment's demands.

[Moda'i] We also have professional assessments stating that what the Army is asking for is maximum security in the worst-case scenario—or, in simpler language, they want both a belt and suspenders with someone holding up their trousers from behind. That is not the way I see things.

[Baum] We have no doubt that the funds are needed, Moda'i said, but he disagreed with the chief of staff's estimate that this would affect state security. Moda'i asserted that this meant taking a calculated risk.

[Moda'i] Speaking as a cabinet minister, but not as the finance minister, I cannot accept that all these needs suddenly became so urgent following the lessons of the Gulf war. It is totally illogical. After all, reality did not change. I agree with the defense establishment that the funds are needed; I am not saying that I do not. However, we need to phase things out, even though I admit that this might entail a certain degree of risk. We have to weigh this against the risk of losing the opportunity for mass immigration and against the danger of the economy's collapse. I will stand firm.

[Baum] We are not proposing any cuts in anything vital, Moda'i said. He made it clear, for example, that he believes there is room for cutbacks in the special allocations for religious parties. The finance minister rejected reports that the state budget is exploited in coalition infighting. I receive full support from the prime minister, Moda'i said. [end recording]

Likud Delegation To Postpone Trip to Egypt

TA3008054091 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 30 Aug 91

[Text] Knesset Member [MK] Sara Doron, chairwoman of the Likud Knesset faction, has decided to postpone the departure of the Likud delegation to Egypt.

Our correspondent Ze'ev Kohen was told that the postponement was due to technical reasons stemming from the agenda of certain faction members. The head of the Foreign Ministry's Egyptian desk is now arranging another date for the visit, probably in late October.

Sources in the Likud yesterday called for a postponement of the delegation's departure to protest the Egyptian Foreign Ministry's criticism of Minister Sharon's settlement policy.

Hebrew University, PRC Medical College in Pact

TA2808094491 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 28 Aug 91 p A10

[Report by Yehuda Golan]

[Text] A medical cooperation agreement—the first of the kind—was signed yesterday between the medical school of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and the medical college of the city of Qingdao in China.

The agreement envisages joint work in the fields of medical education, scientific research, and medical treatment. The signing ceremony was attended by the president of the Chinese college, Prof. Shing Lai Tian, and two department heads.

While the agreement is the first official one between an Israeli university and a Chinese academic institution, the countries have exchanged scientists in the past.

Last year, Israel hosted eight senior Chinese scientists who participated in a special studies project at the Hebrew University.

Communists Denounce Attempted Putsch in USSR

TA2908042991 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0400 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] Earlier this morning, the Israel Communist Party's Central Committee denounced the attempted putsch in the Soviet Union, calling it an adventurous, harmful, and antidemocratic move. At the same time, it denounced what it termed the anticommunist frenzy orchestrated by Yeltsin.

Our party affairs correspondent Shlomo Arad reports that at the end of their meeting at 0300 this morning the participants denounced what they called the onslaught against their party. In the course of the lengthy session, there were no proposals to change the party's leadership despite its earlier pronouncements in favor of the attempted coup in the Soviet Union.

Clashes Could Lead to Tension With Ireland

TA2908072491 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0700 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] The number of incidents involving SLA [South Lebanese Army] troops and Irish soldiers in south Lebanon has been mounting. UNIFIL [UN Interim Force in Lebanon] headquarters cautioned that the continuation of the incidents could lead to diplomatic tension between Israel and Ireland.

Our correspondent Hayim Hecht reports that since the beginning of the week UNIFIL headquarters complained about 57 incidents in which SLA troops opened fire on Irish positions near the village of Bra'shit in south Lebanon. In 30 cases, shells and bullets hit the positions' protective walls. SLA headquarters contends that in all cases the fire was directed at terrorist positions and that the terrorists use UNIFIL positions as a screen.

Settlements Could Make Peace 'Impossible'

JN3008113491 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1100 GMT 30 Aug 91

[Text] Foreign Minister 'Abdallah al-Nusur said today that Israeli settlement plans, declared in parliament by Housing Minister Ari'el Sharon earlier this week, reflected Israel's real intentions towards peace efforts.

Mr. al-Nusur said the Israeli plans to intensify settlement in the occupied Arab lands and link up Jerusalem with West Bank settlements were a violation of international law and a disregard of the will of the international community to solve the Middle East crisis.

The minister appealed to world nations, particularly those directly involved in the peace process, to counter these plans which are designed to bury the peace efforts that had, for the first time, taken a serious approach.

Dr. al-Nusur said if the settlement plans were implemented, they would make a peace settlement impossible in view of the geographic and demographic facts they would create.

Country Asks ILO To Halt Kuwaiti Measures

JN2808170291 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 28 Aug 91 pp 1, 24

[By Mamduh Hawamidah]

[Excerpt] The Jordanian Government officially asked the International Labor Organization [ILO] yesterday to hold urgent and intensive contacts with member countries and employers and workers organizations in the region to get them to intervene with the Kuwaiti authorities to put an immediate end to the crime of collective punishment and inhumane and humiliating policies, measures, and encroachments upon the workers' human rights, and to halt the flagrant violations of human values, principles, and ethics against thousands of Jordanian workers and their families in Kuwait.

This came in an urgent official memorandum Labor and Cabinet Affairs Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Dughmi sent to the director general of the ILO office in Geneva concerning the spiralling of the collective punishment meted out by the Kuwait authorities on thousands of Jordanian and Palestinian citizens and their families and against those deported to Jordan. [passage omitted]

Al-Masri Returns From Libya, Comments on Visit

JN2908194791 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Excerpts] Prime Minister Tahir al-Masri returned to Amman from Banghazi this afternoon, after acting as an emissary for His Majesty King Husayn. He attended yesterday's inauguration of Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi's Great Manmade River project.

Concerning the talks with the Libyan leader and officials, and contacts made by a number of Arab leaders on the periphery of the ceremony, al-Masri had this to say to our political affairs correspondent Kassab Samawi:

[Begin recording] [Al-Masri] [passage omitted] It was an occasion to see some Arab leaders in Banghazi. The meetings among the many Arab leaders were useful. I also made some bilateral contacts, since economic ties and trade between Jordan and Libya are growing all the time. There can still be a wider scope for these exchanges. I was accompanied by the ministers of labor and health. We looked into widening the scope of relations between the two countries. Next month, a Libyan team will visit Jordan to explore further cooperation and work toward absorbing Jordanian expertise in Libya. But we are still at the beginning here. God willing, the coming weeks will see concrete steps in this direction.

[Samawi] How would you assess the talks you held with the Libyan leader?

[Al-Masri] I handed a letter from his majesty the king to the Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi. I also carried the greetings of his majesty the king to the Libyan leadership and his congratulations on this major achievement. I met with al-Qadhdhafi and discussed matters of mutual concern and bilateral relations. The Libyan leader asked me to convey his greetings to his majesty the king and his wish that we keep in constant touch. Libya keeps a close watch on what is happening in the region. I think that there is an appreciation of Jordan's role and the difficulties Jordan and the region in general are experiencing.

[Samawi] News reports spoke of meetings among the Arab leaders attending the ceremony. How important are these contacts?

[Al-Masri] These contacts were held in the absence of collective Arab action and expanded Arab meetings. As such, they are important and useful at this time. Many Arab leaders came to Libya. For instance, Yasir 'Arafat met with President Husni Mubarak. And leaders of the Maghreb states got together. This is in addition to the bilateral meetings I have referred to. These occasions are, therefore, important. The meetings are important too. We hope they will open the road to expanded and collective meetings in the near future.

[Samawi] Thank you.

[Al-Masri] You are welcome. [end recording]

Daily: No Peace Conference Without Palestinians

JN2908101391 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 29 Aug 91 pp 1, 18

[Editorial: "A Peace Conference Without the Palestinians"]

[Text] During his visit to Bulgaria, Yitzhaq Shamir did not conceal his hidden desire to exclude the Palestine

question from the agenda of the proposed peace conference when he announced in Sofia that the anticipated peace conference can be held without the participation of Palestinian representatives and even in the absence of the Palestine question itself.

The tactics Israel has been using since Baker's first visit to the region are aimed at realizing such a result by overlooking the Palestine question and seeking to normalize relations with the Arab countries. Therefore, Shamir did not hesitate to say that the basic question the proposed peace should discuss is establishing normal relations with the Arab countries, no matter what the fate of the Palestine question would be.

Such a self-explanatory Israeli position should remind those who stand behind the idea of convening the peace conference that the crux of the conflict in this region is the Palestine question. Therefore, any attempt to absent this question from the possible peace talks would render the peace process meaningless and turn the proposed conference into a mere party for exchanging speeches and conflicting views.

Hence, what concerns us about Shamir's new statements is to draw the U.S. attention, in its capacity as the power pushing for the idea of the peace conference, to the real Israeli position and to the fact that appeasing or being carried away by the Israeli policy in any way whatsoever will radically blow up the peace idea, and a new chance for realizing a just and comprehensive settlement in the Middle East will be lost.

It is unlikely that any of the Arab countries invited to the peace conference would accept such an Israeli logic which has gone too far in ignoring the true feelings of the Arabs and the nature of their historic positions, especially since what would be required in this case is an Arab acceptance of the continued occupation of territory, the judaization of Jerusalem, and the confiscation of the national and legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, and above all of that, the normalization of political and economic Arab relations with the state that continues to occupy their land and holy shrines.

Hence, we call on all Arab countries, which clearly heard Shamir's statements and understood the meaning of his declared position, to state clearly that without the attendance of the legitimate representatives of the Palestinian people no peace conference will be acceptable to the Arabs, and that in the absence of the Palestine question there will be no peace in this region—a region in which the Palestinian people's question is the crux of this longstanding historical conflict.

Paper Attaches Importance to King's Europe Tour

JN2808103591 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 28 Aug 91, pp 1, 14

[Editorial: "King Husayn's European Tour and the Right Timing for its Success"]

[Text] Within the framework of the active Jordanian move in the international arena to mobilize the required support for the Arab position on the peace efforts, King Husayn is making a new European tour that will include Austria, France, and Britain. After the Jordanian move at the level of frontline Arab states and the PLO, which aimed at crystallizing a clear and specific Arab position, it has become necessary to brief the EC and its official and popular organizations on the Jordanian and Arab concept of the peace issue. His Majesty King Husayn will address the European Parliament in Strasbourg to clarify a host of facts related to developments in the Arab region on the one hand, and the peace conference proposed to be held next October on the other.

King Husayn's current tour of a number of European countries acquires its importance from the fact that it comes amid extremely complicated and dramatically intermingled international circumstances, especially in the light of the hot, unpredictable events in the Soviet Union, which is due to participate with the United States in supervising the peace conference. The tour also comes at a time when Israel is placing obstacles before the peace process, fabricating various reasons and pretexts to delay the convening of the peace conference in a bid to obstruct all peace efforts. Israel rejects any settlement based on international legitimacy resolutions, particularly 242 and 338.

As is known, Jordan has right from the beginning made serious and relentless efforts to win international support, particularly European, for the Palestine question, the crux of the Arab-Israeli conflict. It has realized substantial success in containing the Israeli and Zionist move, besieging it, and forcing it to retreat through exposing Israel's aggressive objectives and expansionist ambitions at the expense of the Palestinian and Arab territories and rights.

The Jordanian move, represented by His Majesty King Husayn's current tour of a number of important and influential European capitals, is a continuation of the Jordanian role and a studied completion of its tasks. We believe that this new tour will yield substantial practical results in support of the Arab stance on the peace process. In other words, it will realize the aspired success because His Majesty King Husayn enjoys the credibility, appreciation, and respect of the EC, and has the ability to convince others of the soundness, legitimacy, and justice of the Arab position. Hence King Husayn's tour has come at the right time.

Interior Minister: No More Kidnapings in Lebanon

PM2908151091 London SAWT AL-KUWAYT AL-DUWALI in Arabic 25 Aug 91 p 5

[Interview with Interior Minister Sami al-Khatib by Ghazi al-Jasim and Husayn Salamah in Beirut; date not given]

[Excerpts] Lebanese Interior Minister Major General Sami al-Khatib has revealed a government plan to stage a security storming campaign designed to search for arms caches in Greater Beirut, in the light of the security organs' investigations and the information available to them in this regard. He emphasized that the Lebanese Army's deployment in all areas is proceeding without hindrance. [passage omitted]

Regarding the cessation of the Lebanese Army's deployment in the South and whether it will affect the operation, Minister al-Khatib emphasized that the solution was clear to the Army—namely, to respond resolutely to any aggression, whether from Israel or from its militias on the occupied borderline. He said that the Lebanese resistance's weapons will not be touched, pending the implementation of Resolution 425 calling for Israel's unconditional withdrawal behind international borders.

Minister al-Khatib praised the fraternal relations binding the peoples and states of Lebanon and Kuwait. [passage omitted]

Asked whether he thought that the Leyraud kidnaping would be the last in Lebanon, he said: I hope so. According to our information, the Iranians want to close the chapter of the Western hostages in Lebanon as soon as they can. There will be no new kidnapping incidents in Lebanon.

He added that Iran has suffered a great deal as a result of the hostage question, since it contributed to its isolation. Iranian President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani's desire is to break his country's isolation. [passage omitted]

He said that the Lebanese Army went to the South for a mission which it will carry out unhesitatingly, and there will be no new "planets." And if the Army in the South faces any aggression from the Lahd militias or from the Israeli occupation army, it will confront it, and whoever neglect his duty will be held to account. With regard to the continued posession of arms by Hizballah and other other parties in the South, Minister al-Khatib said: We cannot take weapons from anyone in the South as long as the Lahd militias possess weapons, because that is illogical. So we will not touch the resistance's arms now. But if the problem of the South is resolved and Resolution 425 is implemented, it will be a totally different matter.

The Lebanese interior minister revealed that the Army has started entering the Jubayl areas in northern Lebanon calmly and without any hindrance, adding that it is now present in Ghidras. He said that protection for the Lebanese Forces militias of Samir Ja'ja' is provided by a Lebanese Army unit. He revealed that orders and plans have been signed to begin storming operations in greater Beirut, especially in the southern suburb, with a view to seizing and confiscating arsenals. He emphasized that Hizballah has handed over its army's weapons. If it still has arms that have not been handed over, the Army will seize them sooner or later. [passage omitted]

President Not To Attend Ceremony for al-Sadr

NC2908202991 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1900 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Statement issued by the information affairs directorate of the president's office in Beirut on 29 August]

[Text] Out of its appreciation for Imam Musa al-Sadr's patriotic stands, which are embodied in the bold decisions the government has made to reunite the country and its institutions, establish the state's authority with its own forces, and formulate a comprehensive development plan for all areas and especially the south, the presidency had accepted the Amal Movement's invitation to participate in the ceremony scheuled to be held in al-Nabatiyah on 30 August to mark the anniversary of the disappeance of Imam Musa al-Sadr. The presidency, however, has been surprised by Minister Nabih Birri's stand, which identifies him with those who stand to lose from the government's gains and who are exploiting the issue of Imam al-Sadr for personal reasons unrelated to the national interests Imam al-Sadr consistently sought to safeguard. Accordingly, the presidency has decided against participating in the ceremony in line with its view that the national interests must be above any one-upmanship.

To demonstrate the importance it attaches to this anniversary and the way it shares the Shiite community's desire to clarify the implications of the imam's case and the Lebanese people's hope for his return, the speech the president was to have delivered on the occasion will be published in the press.

Karami Discussed al-Sadr Issue With al-Qadhdhafi

NC3008085991 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0800 GMT 30 Aug 91

[Text] AFP reported today that Prime Minister 'Umar Karami and Ministers Buwayz and Fakhuri raised with Libyan Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi the question of Imam Musa al-Sadr's disappearance. Al-Qadhdhafi reportedly expressed his readiness to finance an investigation into the case and affirmed his support for Lebanon, particularly stressing his readiness to send assistance to the Lebanese Army.

Defense Minister Receives Austrian Counterpart

JN2608160491 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] Damascus—Staff General Mustafa Talas, deputy commander in chief of the Army and Armed Forces, deputy prime minister, and defense minister, today received Austrian National Defense Minister (Peter Korriri) [name as heard] and his delegation. The major general, head of the Syrian side to the Armistice Committee, attended the meeting.

Conversation during the meeting revolved around the ties of friendship and cooperation between the two friendly armies and means of improving them to serve the interests of the two friendly peoples and countries.

The Austrian minister arrived in Damascus the day before yesterday on a several-day visit, during which he will inspect the Austrian unit serving as part of the UN forces in the Golan Heights.

Cabinet Reviews Arab, International Developments

JN2708155591 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Excerpts] The cabinet today held a session under Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi. [passage omitted]

During the session, the cabinet conducted a general political review of the developments in the Arab and international arenas. The foreign minister explained the outcome of a number of contacts, meetings, and developments related to the Arab and international efforts to convene the peace conference. He also explained Syria's firm stand, which is interested in achieving a just and comprehensive peace in the region, based on the UN resolutions and international legitimacy.

The cabinet also discussed various points of business on its agenda and made appropriate decisions.

Arabs Blamed for Failure To Transcend Rhetoric

JN2908150591 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Station commentary]

[Excerpts] Gentlemen: If Arab unity is an undoubted goal for Syria and the Syrians—this was the case even before independence—it has become more so since the Corrective Movement that set out to rally Arab ranks and marshal Arab resources using all means, including effective solidarity, to promote all forms of unity. This major pan-Arab enterprise has become the focus of Syria's political moves on all fronts and at all levels, is being made more imperative by the Zionist dangers looming large on the horizon.

Observers cannot but see that many Arabs have yet to measure up to the challenges and ambitions the Arab nation is tackling. Some other Arabs have veered off the pan-Arab course and plunged their country into a series of idle disputes and wars that have done considerable damage to the overall Arab cause. The rulers of Iraq have squandered their great country's resources in disputes that conflict with the most fundamental Arab and Islamic values. Their arrogance and mismanagement led them to the occupation of Kuwait, triggering a dangerous crisis. The results have been a terrible disaster to the people and resources of Iraq and Kuwait, the undermining of intra-Arab trust, and the opening of the door to a reemergence of foreign tutelage. This, at a time when all Arabs were supposed to stand shoulder to shoulder against intensified Jewish immigration to occupied Palestine and to bring effective pressure to bear on those who bankroll and sponsor the immigration in order to halt this danger that promises to trigger an explosion in the Middle East. [passage omitted]

Long a champion of Arab rights, Yugoslavia is now in the throes of an internal struggle, and the Soviet Union, also a regular backer of Arab causes, is also beset by internal problems of its own, which may drag on for some time. Meanwhile, the influx of Jewish immigrants into occupied Palestine continues unabated. The Zionist enemy leaders make no secret of explicit plans to encircle Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights with a belt of Jewish settlements and housing communities, changing their demography and making a fait accompli by banking on Arab disarray and the preoccupation of the international community with Soviet and Yugoslav developments and the resurgence of nationalities.

If the Arabs can legitimately ask why the West rushes to recognize such small republics as the Baltic states that have failed to sacrifice a single martyr at the altar of independence but ignores the aspirations of Palestinians for independence, when they have given thousands upon thousands of martyrs and are putting up daily resistance to Zionist occupation and are living in an extended terrible prison, they must ask why they have thus far failed to impress the West with the need to clearly commit itself to the support of the Palestinian cause and take a stand against Israel's crimes and brazen abuses of human rights. The answer is clear: The Arabs are guilty of a failure to stand up to the plans that threaten their land and resources, and are to blame for their failure to go beyond rhetoric to action in their confrontation with their enemies. [passage omitted]

Afghanistan

Najibollah Speech at Meli Shura Opening

LD2908211291 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1630 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Speech by President Najibollah on 29 August opening the seventh Meli Shura session in Kabul—recorded, in Dari]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Esteemed members of Meli Shura of the Republic of Afghanistan. Based on Article 86 of the Constitution of the Republic of Afghanistan, the seventh periodical session of the Meli Shura should be opened in the first week of Sonbola [begins 23 August].

A few days ago, the freedom-loving people of Afghanistan celebrated the 72d anniversary of the independence of the country as a national festival, which is source of inspiration for all Afghanistan's patriots toward the protection of the independence and territorial integrity of Afghanistan.

During the last three months, since the recess of the Meli Shura, the state of the Republic of Afghanistan carried out comprehensive efforts toward a peaceful and political solution of the issue of Afghanistan, despite the pressures of war by the extremist forces. The situation remains complicated from the military point of view despite the negotiations among Afghans themselves and the efforts by the state, the United Nations, and a number of countries interested in the political solution of Afghanistan. The armed extremists opposition and their patrons express views on a political solution to the issue of Afghanistan on the surface, but they tried to intensify military pressure, using all their open and secret means in the country. The extremists kill children, youths and elderly people by firing long-distance missiles. They resort to such actions aimed at a continuation of the assistance by their international patrons, they also distort public opinion inside and outside the country regarding the developed process of the political and peaceful solution of the issue of Afghanistan. They try to sabotage a political and peaceful solution to the country's problems by spreading fear and [word indistinct] in society through their anti-Islamic and anti-Afghanistan actions.

The main factor for the complicated military-political situation in the country is the pursuance of policies by the military circles of Pakistan against the Republic of Afghanistan. Pakistan's policy continues in a military direction despite the interest expressed and our willingness to normalize relations between both countries. [passage omitted]

The armed forces of the Republic of Afghanistan carried out successful defensive measures in Lowgar, Maydan, and other regions. The break of the blockade of Gardez and Ghazni, the foiling of plans to attack Qandahar, crushing the activities of extremists in Jalalabad, in the areas around Kabul and the highways, meant the armed opposition plans to intensify military pressure on the Republic of Afghanistan were not implemented fully. They tried to make up for these defeats in one way or other in the northern part of the country and in the highways. Of course, all the measures taken by the state of the Republic of Afghanistan during this period were of a defensive character and their purpose was to ensure a relative stability in the cities and villages, and to prevent the sabotage of the political and peaceful solution of the issue of Afghanistan.

Dear friends, fast developments recently occurred in the Soviet Union, which drew the attention of the world, especially the neighboring countries of the Soviet Union. The state of the Republic of Afghanistan, which attentively followed the developments in that country, took a realistic stance during the first hours of the incidents in the Soviet Union, based on the national interests of Afghanistan, as a neutral country.

It was approved by the public opinion. Fortunately, we declared the national reconciliation policy four years and eight months ago. The new Constitution was approved by the Grand Assembly. The stance of Afghanistan, as a free, independent and neutral country, with national sovereignty and territorial integrity, was declared in the Constitution. We pledged to the Grand Assembly to use all our efforts to implement the Constitution. We had no right to declare any stance contrary to the decisions of the various Grand Assemblies and the Constitution of the country, and the permanent neutral stance of the Republic of Afghanistan which enjoy freedom and independence. Therefore, we did not make a hasty decision. But we expressed a sound stance, paying full attention and in keeping with those specifications which are mentioned in the Constitution, and based on the national reconciliation. Even Westerners confessed to the fact that we have taken a wise stance—or another word that they used, a cautious stance. However, life showed and the incidents showed that our stance was correct. If someone suggest that we made special predictions, it was not like that. It emanated only from our policy. It was our policy which instructed us, and the existence of a Constitution in our society, that we should not go wrong in our direction.

Naturally the fast developments in the Soviet Union had an effect on the neighboring countries including our country. As was declared in the official stance of the Republic of Afghanistan, the Soviet Union, as a great country and guarantor of the Geneva accords, also approved the recent statement by the United Nations on a political solution to the issue of Afghanistan, should fulfil its morale and political commitments toward Afghanistan.

Our realistic and independent stance toward the recent developments in the Soviet Union is a bright example of the fact that the state of the Republic of Afghanistan has formulated all its policies, measures, and stances within the national interest of Afghanistan, since the very day of

the declaration of national reconciliation. The same principle was also applied to our stance the Gulf crisis.

Dear compatriots. It should be clear to every one that the national reconciliation policy does not follow anyone and has not been created based on someone else's thoughts. [passage omitted]

Those who are, so to speak, watching from high ground, should be asked as to what practical step, however small, have they taken toward the cessation of war in Afghanistan.

Dear compatriots, as has been seen, following the events taking place in the Soviet Union, a number of Afghan personalities outside the country once again expressed their opinion through interviews concerning the question of Afghanistan. There is no doubt that these opinions and interviews, on the one hand, contained positive and constructive positive points in connection with the plan of the UN Secretary General. On the other hand, nevertheless, in the conditions when the people of Afghanistan are burning in the flames of war, sympathetic interviews alone, without taking practical steps toward negotiations and reaching understanding, cannot cure our pains. They should not sit and wait until another incident occurs and then give another interview. Despite the detection of some positive signals in the positions of the opposition personalities and circles, foreign pressures creates obstacles on the path of progress towards negotiations. [passage indistinct] They, in an unrealistic and irresponsible way, insist that the state of the Republic of Afghanistan should unilaterally step aside before the commencement of any talks and the beginning of the peace process.

It should be stated with frankness that the state of the Republic of Afghanistan is not prepared to allow a situation under which a power vacuum will be created, which would undoubtedly result in a bloody, internal war. However, at the same time it emphasizes that no single power, including the present system, is able to maintain nationwide and permanent stability in the Republic of Afghanistan. Political forces, groups, and Afghan personalities should think about their national responsibility before the people of Afghanistan and (?pursue), realistically, the path of talks and understanding and joint efforts toward the establishment of peace in the country. As far as it depends on the state of the Republic of Afghanistan, it has rendered its measures in line with the will of the nation, despite the problems that existed and exist from every angle, and has made its historical choice concerning a peaceful solution with the participation of all political forces without any (?precondition). Our understanding of the essence of unconditional political talks is that all sides in the talks will have the right to put forward whatever plan about all questions which relate to the today and tomorrow of our country. All disputed issues, including negotiations, concerning the mechanism of the peaceful transfer of power and elected government of the people, could be discussed and settled at the negotiations table.

In order to eliminate the crisis of confidence and provide the grounds for objectively assessing the situation, we propose to the opponents of the state: Let the United Nations form a working committee from the Afghan warring sides who desire a political solution of the question. This committee, which would work under the supervision and support of the United Nations, would be a good beginning toward the creation of the very first grounds for contact between the sides, and its future development toward official talks and finding suitable formulas for the solution of the question of Afghanistan.

I would like, through the tribune of the Meli Shura, to speak to Afghan personalities, who, now and again give statements and interviews from Europe and Peshawar to put forward prescriptions for a political solution in Afghanistan. I maintain that the state of the Republic of Afghanistan is ready, under the supervision of a UN delegation, to provide locations in Kabul for an exchange by you with the people of Afghanistan. You can come to Kabul, and if you do not want to talk with or meet the state authorities, meet with the people. In this way you will become aware of their pain and suffering, which has lasted for over a decade. I am confident that in the course of meeting the people, they will succeed in realizing a series of realities.

Esteemed delegates, the country's parliament has consistently shown timely and patriotic reaction in connection with political developments regarding Afghanistan. [passage omitted] There is no problem in the world that cannot be solved through talks and understanding. It has now been seen that Arabs and Israelis, following military clashes and hot confrontations, finally agreed to sit around a negotiation table and peacefully assess the problems—a solution to which was not achieved through war. Undoubtedly Afghans, who are the follower of one faith, share a united homeland, and are of common group and for Afghan interests, could and should be able to solve the problem of Afghanistan in a peaceful way.

Respected members of Meli Shura, the main aim of the state is the broadening of the area of free activity of political parties, the free expression of opinion and beliefs, and the freedom of the press in the course of democracy. It should, however, be pointed out that without legality and the observation of laws, that you, representatives of the state, who approve them, democracy (?cannot) survive. The state, while sincerely and seriously supporting democracy, which wants the participation of all people of Afghanistan in the political and social life of the country, wil, the same time strengthen national discipline and will (?decisively) deal in preventing activities which, particularly at this critical time in the country, drag the situation to disruption and anarchism.

Allow me, in the name of Almighty God and in the hope of peace and prosperity for the people of Afghanistan, open the seventh term of the Meli Shura of the Republic of Afghanistan in accordance with Article 86 of the country's Constitution. I wish further success to the

parliament of Afghanistan and each of its members in carrying out their national duties, and pray for peace and tranquility for the people of Afghanistan.

Success comes from God. [Applause]

Afghan Mojahedin Leaders on Talks, USSR Events

LD2908175591 Tehran IRNA in English 1629 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] Tehran, Aug. 29, IRNA—Leaders of Afghan mojahedin groups who participated in the tripartite talks with Iranian and Pakistani officials here Thursday, welcomed the Soviet developments as auguring well for the liberation of Afghanistan from the Kabul Marxist regime.

"The biggest success of the recent events in the Soviet Union is the dismissal of those involved in the Soviet Army's invasion of Afghanistan," Burhanuddin Rabbani, leader of the Jamiat-E-Islami (Islamic Society) told IRNA.

Rabbani lauded Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin's stance against the Soviet military occupation of Afghanistan and criticized Soviet President Mikhail's Gorbachev's administration for continuing assistance to the Kabul regime.

He said the revival of the Afghan issue, the unified stance taken by the mojahedin leaders towards the U.N. chief's 5-point peace plan and harmony between Iranian and Pakistani policies towards the Afghan issue, were among the achievements of the Tehran tripartite talks.

"Afghanistan is now dangerously faced with an entirely illiterate generation, but the Islamic Republic of Iran can help overcome this shortcoming because of its sharing a common culture and language with Afghanistan," he said.

Sayyed Ahmad Gaylani, leader of the National Islamic Front, said Soviet developments would speed up the liberation of Afghanistan.

"The (abortive) coup d'etat in Moscow, has made the Soviet people feel only a fraction of our sufferings throughout these long years," he said.

He described the Tehran meeting as a "positive effort" to find a political solution to the Afghan issue and hailed Iran and Pakistan for their efforts in this regard.

Mawlawi Nasrullah Mansur, another mojahedin leader, said the collapse of Communism and elimination of those advocating that school of thought in the Soviet Union has cornered the regime ruling Kabul.

He called the tripartite session a step "towards supporting the jihad (holy struggle) of the Afghan people." The Tehran talks preceded by those in Islamabad last month, were held in a "cordial atmosphere very essential to the future of Afghanistan," he added.

Hojjatoleslam Rahmatollah Mortazawi, spokesman for the Islamic Unity Party, a coalition of all Iran-based Afghan mojahedin groups, hailed the decisions taken in Tehran and Islamabad as "promising".

He said the Afghan groups did not want to negotiate with the "illegitimate" regime ruling in Kabul to resolve the Afghan issue.

625 'Extremists' Killed in Recent Fighting

LD2908130491 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0421 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] Kabul, Aug 28, BAKHTAR—A civilian was wounded and a residential house demolished by the 11 rpt 11 rockets fired by the extremists on Kabul City last week (August 21-27, 1991), a concerned military source reported to BAKHTAR today. During mopping up operations carried out by the armed forces in Kabul, Logar and Ghowr Provinces tens of extremists were killed and some others wounded.

Sizable quantities of arms and ammunition including 153 rpt 153 ground to ground rockets, 65 rpt 65 cannon shells, 10,000 rpt 10,000 cartridges, 45 rpt 45 handgrenades, one ground to air blowpipe rocket and, 294 rpt 294 mortar shells were seized and 9 rpt vehicles loaded with arms and ammunition, were destroyed.

A quantity of 20 rpt 20 kg of (?explosives belonging to extremists) to organise explosions in the capital was discovered and seized by the security forces during the week.

In the sanguinary clashes took place among the Gulbuddin, Jamil-Urrah-Man, Rababani, Khalis, Jamyat, Harakat and Sayaf [words indistinct] Nangarhar, Konarha and Baghlan Provinces 625 rpt 625 extremists were killed and 1,317 rpt 1,317 others wounded. Over 100 rpt 100 gulbuddin [words indistinct] Khalis elements during the week.

Also, 257 rpt 257 refugee families numbering 1,645 rpt 1,645 members and 580 rpt 580 individuals returned from [words indistinct].

Afghans 1,025,000 rpt 1,025,000 was assisted to the families affected by the extremist rockets in Kabul during this period.

Quantities of 26 rpt 26 kgs of [words indistinct] 1,300 as well as 5,300 rpt 5,300 hashish bushes worth afs 400,000 rpt 400,000 and two kgs of heroin valued afs 2,000,000 rpt 2,000,000 were detected and eliminated.

Notes number -075-2086 [as received] of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were submitted to the office of the UN secretary general during the week.

Report on Mojahedin Offensive in Various Regions

BK2908143091 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1400 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] Reports from Afghanistan speak of continued fighting between the mojahedin and Kabul regime forces in various parts of the country. The mojahedin attacked the (?battalion) headquarters at Pol-e Charkhi area in the mid-east sector of Kabul, causing heavy damage to it. They set fire to an ammunition dump in the headquarters and killed more than 15 Kabul regime troops. They also seized a large quantity of arms and ammunition.

In another offensive on the Kabul regime's security posts in (?Abol) city, the mojahedin killed a number of soldiers.

Bangladesh

Border Coordination Meeting With India Ends

BK2908160491 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1530 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] The three-day border coordination conference between Bangladesh and India ended in Sylhet today. The deputy director general of Bangladesh Rifles and the Inspector general of Border Security Force of Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, and Nagaland led their delegations. Both sides agreed to take stringent measures to further secure their respective frontiers for apprehending criminals. They also decided to exchange information regarding smugglers and their affiliated organizations in respective areas.

Agreement Signed With India on Rail Services

BK2908014491 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 0110 GMT 29 aug 91

[Text] Bangladesh and India have signed an agreement for the movement of goods trains between the two countries. The agreement was signed in Dhaka yesterday following the bilateral talks between the representatives of the two countries. Additional secretary of the railway division M. Faizul Haq and financial adviser of Indian Railway Ministry B.B. Subramaniam have signed the agreement.

Foreign Minister Returns From India 29 Aug

BK2908160691 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1530 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] Foreign Minister A.S.M. Mustafizur Rahman returned to Dhaka today after a three-day visit to India. He held talks on bilateral and other matters with Indian External Affairs Minister Madhavsinh Solanki. The foreign minister also called on President Venkataraman and Prime Minister Narasimha Rao.

Commentary Hails Soviet Coup Failure

BK2908152991 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh External Service in English 1230 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] Bangladesh is happy over the positive political developments in the Soviet Union. In fact, when eight coplotters were conspiring last week to topple Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev from power, it was Bangladesh which had lost no time in urging them not to discontinue the process of democratization and deregulation pursued by Gorbachev. By issuing such an official statement, Bangladesh has only recognized the democratic aspirations of the Soviet people that are embodied in Gorbachev's sweeping reforms.

A successful coup in the Soviet Union would have strangled the Gorbachev reforms, a new-born democracy, and revived the East-West confrontation. And now that it has failed, Bangladesh expects an improvement in the political situation. As the Soviet Union and the world sigh a relief after the three grim days, they have reasons to hope that perestroyka will regain momentum after its snail's pace of the last months.

Rebellion has not yet been totally crushed, but its influence is waning. Russia's MPs are demanding to break or reorganize institutions which supported the coup plotters. The pressure on Gorbachev from the right is expected to ease up, to all appearances, to give him more chances for cooperation with democracy. The doom looming over perestroyka gave rise to an embryonic left-centrist bloc whose [word indistinct] had long seemed too good to be true. The new-found unity is personified in Boris Yeltsin, the Russian president, who worked with selfless courage to rescue Gorbachev, the man whose resignation he had strongly demanded a mere six months ago. Many Soviet and Western analysts think the two presidents will now make it up between themselves.

The Soviet coup investigation is still ahead. It is expected to show that the abortive attempt was encouraged by fear of the loss of centralized authoritarian power, which the Soviet treaty promised. Now that the coup flopped, the union treaty may gain new pertinence. It is human to keep together in trouble. For three days the Soviet Union was united with a painful realization of danger. Republican leaders, whether favoring the treaty or opposing it, refused to recognize the eight plotters as lawful government. Now they are more likely to side with the treaty than before the fatal day of August 19th.

The failure of coup in the Soviet Union was brought closer by international opposition. Hotlines connected Yeltsin with leaders of all major Western countries. Soviet resistance was encouraged by the world as it in definite voice came across the frontiers. The junta had no chance of international recognition. It became clear after the West promptly took back its promises of loans and other economic assistance. Still the three terrible

days made the Soviets doubt whether the Group of Seven took a sound stand when they had met Gorbachev in London. Aid put off till after successful reforms spelled danger for the West. As for the Soviet Union, many Soviets felt the plotters used the serious economic crisis as a cover for their sinister plans.

The grim days in the Soviet Union last week were an ordeal for many and will offer a serious lesson. These were the days when an unprecedented explosion of self-consciousness of the people occurred. By their actions, ordinary Soviets showed that they were concerned not only about shop counters. It became clear to all that they were ready to pay with their lives for the genuine ideals of democracy. Before August the 21st, someone may still have retained hopes and illusions as to the possibility of refurbishing and reinstating totalitarianism. Now not a trace is left of them. Yet, over the years of perestroyka this inhuman system was weakened and undermined, now its total collapse is checking in.

Support for South African Majority Rule Stated

BK2808160491 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1530 GMT 28 Aug 91

[Text] Acting President Justice Shabuddin Ahmed has reiterated Bangladesh's total support for the establishment of majority rule in South Africa. The acting president expressed this view [words indistinct] Uganda in Bangladesh, Mr. (Majid Yuvuko), paid a farewell call on him in Dhaka today. Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed expressed his satisfaction at the recent developments in South Africa toward the dismantling of apartheid. He appreciated the role of the Organization of African Unity, OAU, in accelerating decolonization and democratization of Africa and in promoting cooperation among nations of the continent. The acting president conveyed his greetings to President Yoweri Museveni, the government, and the people of Uganda.

India

Details on Remote Sensing Satellite, Launch Plan

BK2908164091 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Excerpts] India today joined the select band of nations in remote sensing on continuing basis from space with the successful launch of its satellite, IRS-1B from the Baykonur Cosmodrome in the Soviet Union. According to official sources, the Indian remote sensing satellite, IRS-1B, weighing 985 kg was launched at 1219 Indian standard time by a Vostok rocket. Soon after the launch, the Spacecraft Control Center [SCC] in Bangalore received the telemetry signals from it, indicating proper functioning. Soon after, the participating ground stations around the globe started tracking the satellite.

IRS-1B is intended to ensure continuity of operational remote sensing data services for natural resources survey and management. The data are being used for diverse applications such as agriculture, drought warning, wasteland management, water resources, mineral prospecting, marine and inland fisheries. More than 80 percent of the requirement for satellite remote sensing data of the country is now met by Indian satellites. The satellite launched today will be monitored and control by the ISRO [Indian Space Research Organization] telemetry tracking and command network with the SCC center located at (Pinya), Bangalore.

Both houses of Parliament today hailed the successful launching of the second remote sensing satellite IRS-1B. [passage omitted] The prime minister said that facilities are being set up at Sriharikota to launch the satellites from there by next year. He said 102 crore rupees have been spent so far on the two remote sensing satellites launched by the country.

Parliament Hails Launch of Remote Satellite

BK2908131791 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] Both houses of parliament today hailed the successful launching of the second remote sensing satellite, RS-1B. Amidst thumping of desks, the prime minister announced that the satellite is now circling 900 km above the surface of the earth. Mr. Rao said the nation's most experienced hands are controlling the satellite at the ISRO [Indian Space Research Organization] telemetry tracking and command network center at (Pinya), Bangalore. This is connected to other ISRO tracking ground stations at Lucknow and Mauritius. He said all systems and subsystems of the satellite have been designed and fabricated indigenously and the successful launch marks India's commitment to use space technology for peaceful, constructive, and developmental ends. He said remote sensing is an important area for management of the nation's land and ocean resources.

China's Decision To Sign Nuclear Treaty Viewed

BK2808102191 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 15 Aug 91 p 11

[Editorial: "China for NPT"]

[Text] China's declaration of its intention to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty [NPT] without conditions creates a strategic dilemma in South Asia. It is as certain to upset Pakistan as it is likely to irritate India. Islamabad will be upset because China's decision to sign the NPT, announced by Premier Li Peng during Japanese Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu's recent visit to Beijing, will amount to a notice that Pakistan's source of acquiring nuclear (and missile) technology will henceforth dry up. This could be rather unnerving for Pakistan as Beijing's decision may mean that its planned supply of a nuclear-powered Han class submarine to Islamabad to neutralise India's strategic advantage from the leased Soviet submarine (since returned by Delhi) will not materialise. China's decision, close on the heels of similar indications from the other nuclear weapons power, France, marks Beijing's

grateful acceptance of the courtesy which the world's bigs, led by the United States, have extended to the Asian giant as a member of that exclusive club. China is the only poor country in the UN veto powers' league, poorer than even the Soviet Union. It has no means to catch up with others in the league unless Japan and United States help it in economic and technological development to cover the lost time and ground. That assurance of help awaited China's agreement to go fully with the West in implementing President Bush's blueprint of a new world order. Key elements of that dispensation include a prevention of nuclear non-proliferation and a curb on the spread of missile technology. By agreeing to sign the NPT, China has satisfied the West without notifying any desire to downgrade its status as a major nuclear and missile power.

Mr Li Peng has created some problems for India, although it may be long before China actually signs and ratifies the NPT. Even before it does so, there would be extraordinary pressure on threshold countries like India to sign the treaty. Having acquired nuclear capability, China need not go with India to dub the treaty as discriminatory. After Soviet President Gorbachev's recent agreement with Mr Bush at the Moscow summit to work together to prevent nuclear proliferation, and Mr Li's pledge before Mr Kaifu it would need extraordinary diplomatic skill for a country like India to resist the NPT for long.

Concern Expressed About Pakistani Nuclear Program

BK2908161491 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] India has expressed concern over Pakistan's weapons-oriented clandestine nuclear program and its continued unabated support to terrorism and subversion in Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir. This was stated in the annual report of the External Affairs Ministry for 1990-91. It said India is continuing its efforts to persuade Pakistan to abandon its negative approach toward New Delhi and joint it in establishing a good-neighborly and tension-free relationship on the basis of the Simla Agreement.

The report says India has conveyed in unequivocal terms to Pakistan that the latter's continued support to terrorism directed against India is not only in contravention of the Simla Agreement and of universally accepted norms of interstate conduct, but also adversely affected any confidence building in bilateral relationship. The report says improvement in India-Nepal relations received top priority last year.

According to the report, 1990 witnessed the continued consolidation of Indo-U.S. relations. A limited cooperation in the fields of defense and trade were highlights of the year. There were further improvement in dialogue with China over a negotiated settlement of the boundary issue. The second meeting of the joint working group also resulted in an agreement on a mechanism for maintaining peace and tranquillity in the border areas.

In the Lok Sabha, the external affairs minister also urged Pakistan to desist from hostile propaganda and its unwarranted interference in our internal affairs. Mr. Madhavsinh Solanki told the house in a written reply today that the government will continue to take appropriate measures to project the correct picture regarding the situation in Jammu and Kashmir. He made it clear that there is no role for the United Nations or any third party intervention in Kashmir which is an integral part of India. He said the only issue that remains to be solved is the vacation by Pakistan of the territory illegally held by it.

SNC Recognized as Custodian of Cambodia

BK2908161891 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] India has recognized the Supreme National Council [SNC] of Cambodia as the custodian of that country's sovereignty. This decision was conveyed to the chairman of the SNC, Prince Sihanouk, and the Cambodian prime minister, Mr. Hun Sen, in Phatthaya in Thailand today by Mr. L.L. Malhotra, secretary in the External Affairs Ministry. The Indian official also informed them that a representative will be sent as soon as the council's headquarters are set up in Phnom Penh.

Chief Minister Wants Burmese Border Sealed

BK2808101891 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 28 Aug 91

[Text] The Arunachal Pradesh chief minister, Mr. Gegong Apang, has urged the center to seal the Indo-Myanmar [Burma] border to check the growing infiltration of militants from across the border. In an interview with PTI [PRESS TRUST OF INDIA], Mr. Apang said that his government has stepped up measures to contain such infiltrations. He said 11 trained militants and four activists of National Socialist Council of Nagaland have already surrendered.

Advantages of Interdependence With Nepal Stressed

BK2908095191 Delhi PATRIOT in English 19 Aug 91 p 4

[Editorial: "New Indo-Nepal Ties"]

[Text] There is an immediate need to formalise the Indo-Nepal Trade and Transit Treaty. After a bitter 15-month long impasse in bilateral relations following the earlier suspension of the treaty, in the absence of a democratically elected government in Nepal, the status quo ante was restored in June this year. It is generally expected that relations with India would be high on the agenda of the Koirala government. The meeting of the Indo-Nepal Joint Commission in Kathmandu early this month would appear to have started the process for improving bilateral ties. Nepal is socially, culturally and economically close to India. Indeed, for geographic reasons Nepal's economic well-being is best fostered by close India-Nepal cooperation. The Himalayan kingdom

suffered great hardship following the suspension of the Trade and Transit Treaty in March 1989. Close relations with India are therefore a necessity which neither India nor Nepal can ignore. Nepal obviously wants an easy access to Indian markets. But the problems in Indo-Nepalese relations arose because Nepal, on account of its weak industrial and economic base, was unable to make use of tariff concessions offered by India. As a result, a misconception has been perpetuated about the unequal status of the bilateral ties between India and Nepal. And though the need for closer economic and political cooperation was recognised by one and all in Nepal, various parties have periodically sought to exploit the so-called India factor for political ends. In the past, palace-appointed Prime Ministers often resorted to India-bashing to press New Delhi on matters related to trade and transit. Nepal's Communist Parties have taken a critical view of the Nepali Congress's policy towards India. Both on the questions of trade and management of water resources, the communists have accused India of reaping unfair advantages. On the question of water resources management, they reject India's standing as co-riparian and maintain that Nepal has "undisputed sovereign rights over the rivers". With regard to the bilateral trade relations, they want a review of the open border and tariff preferences with India on the ground that these restrict Nepal's industrial development. Such as stance, critical of India, can partly be explained by the communists' desire to consolidate their own position vis-a-vis the Nepali Congress. It is against such a backdrop that one must view the latest statement by the leader of the opposition in the Nepalese parliament and the president of the United Communist Party of Nepal (Marxist-Leninist) [UCML], Mr Man Mohan Adhikari, demanding a review of Indo-Nepalese relations. Following their emergence as a strong opposition (in the 205-member Pratinidhi Sabha, the communists have 69 seats), the UCML has stepped up its criticism. This is expected to put the Nepali Congress, which has strong links with India's political leaders, on the defensive. The fact that the Nepal Congress is considered to be pro-India has made such a task easier for the communists. To deflect such criticisms, Prime Minister G.P. Koirala has been engaged in a cautious tight-rope walk on matters of foreign policy. He has therefore repeatedly emphasised that his government is neither pro-India nor pro-China. Obviously, heading a new broad-based political representation, Mr Koirala has to take a more assertive line towards India. This is also essential to broad-base Nepal's development efforts. The Indian Government, if it wishes to help the stability of the democratic government in Nepal, must emphasise interdependence of India and Nepal for mutual advantage. Nepalese communists would also do well to recall that Nepalese patriotism has been often misused by the powers inimical to India-Nepal friendship.

Bangladeshi Foreign Minister Leaves for Calcutta

BK2908094291 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] The Bangladeshi foreign minister, Mr. Mustafizur Rahman, left New Delhi for Calcutta this morning on his way back to Bangladesh. He was seen off at the airport among others by the external affairs minister, Mr. Madhavsinh Solanki.

Pakistan Foreign Secretary's Visit, Ties Viewed

BK3008092991 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 24 Aug 91 p 8

[Editorial: "The Shaharyar Visit"]

[Text] The Pakistani Foreign Secretary, Mr Shaharyar M. Khan's recent visit to Delhi began with a handicap. Indian official circles believed that it was merely an exercise to establish the opinion in the West that Pakistan was sincere about improving its ties with India. Success in this, it was further believed, would be used to raise the Kashmir issue at the UN General Assembly session next month and the Commonwealth summit at Harare in October. Matters were not helped by the Pakistani Prime Minister Mr Nawaz Sharif's recent statement in an interview with NEWSWEEK that the Kashmir issue could lead to war between India and Pakistan. It not only caused an uproar in the Lok Sabha while Mr Khan was still here but seemed to vindicate scepticism about the purpose of his visit which was stated to be to convey a special message from Mr Sharif to Mr Narasimha Rao about the need to continue earnest efforts to improve India-Pakistan relations.

It is, therefore, not at all surprising that the visit has not made the slightest difference to relations between the two countries despite Mr Khan's talks with the prime minister, Mr Narasimha Rao, the foreign minister, Mr Madhavsinh Solanki, the defence minister, Mr Sharad Pawar, and officials. The only positive aspect to the visit was that it was the first official contact between the Pakistani Government and the new regime in India. The usefulness of such contacts, however, has to be judged in terms of results. The issues that vitiate India-Pakistan relations, particularly the Kashmir and Siachen disputes, have so far defied solution. But there is no reason why efforts to solve them should be given up. It is ridiculous that India and Pakistan, which have so much in common, should remain frozen in confrontation when old enmities are dissolving in many parts of the world. Obstinate problems like Kashmir and Siachen, however, can become amenable to solution only if the present tension and suspicion between the two countries give way to mutual trust. For this to happen, Pakistan must forthwith cease to assist the militants in Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir. In the absence of such a move, all its protestations about wanting to improve ties with India will ring hollow and diplomatic travel, however, frequent and high-level, will lead nowhere.

Troops Foil Pakistan Attempt To Cross Line

BK2908090791 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0730 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistani troops launched another major attack on Indian positions in

Punch sector last night. Indian troops returned the fire and foiled Pakistani attempt to cross the Line of Actual Control. There was no casualty on the Indian side and those on the Pakistani side could not be ascertained. According to reports received this morning, the firing was continuing.

Pakistan Asked To Stop 'Hostile Propaganda'

BK2908094091 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] India has asked Pakistan to desist from hostile propaganda and its unwarranted interference in its internal affairs. The external affairs minister, Mr. Madhavsinh Solanki, told the Lok Sabha that the government is aware of the reported statement of a top aide of the Pakistani prime minister that the diplomatic missions were asked to step up anti-India tirade on Kashmir. The minister assured the house that the government will continue to take appropriate measures to project the correct picture regarding the situation in Jammu and Kashmir. He said the international community has been apprised of Pakistan's assistance to terrorism and subversion in the state which is an integral part of India. In a written reply, Mr. Solanki said Pakistan's actions violate the Simla Agreement and the universally accepted norms of interstate conduct.

Commentary Notes Power Struggle in Pakistan

BK2908115891 Delhi All India Radio General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Commentary by V.P. Dutt, former pro-vice chancellor of Delhi University: "Power Conflict in Pakistan"]

[Text] The troika in Pakistan no longer seems to be functioning in tandem. Power has resided in Pakistan in the Trimurti [trinity] comprised of the Army high command, the president, and the prime minister as the head of the majority party in the Pakistan National Assembly. Whenever there is tension and division within these three centers of authority, the political structure is shaken with discord into rumblings. Often the differences relate to more devious objectives and ambitions but get focussed on a volatile issue. As it appears in the present case on the perception of relations with India, the former Army chief believed, at least in public, in the existing and present danger of a conflict with India, whereas a different perception appears to mock the prime minister Mr. Nawaz Sharif's remarks. In reality, this may be a case of fencing over the more subtle problems of the exercise of authority.

The president, the third head of the troika, is maintaining a sphinx-like silence. The entire period of Benazir Bhutto's prime ministership was tension-laden and it was the president who with the silent support of the Army moved to oust the prime minister and change the political balance. As this combination enabled the emergence of the IJI [Islami Jamhoori Ittehad] as the majority party in the new elections and its leader Mr. Nawaz Sharif as the prime minister, the lines of the three centers met and ensured a nonharmonious functioning. But only temporarily.

The inbuilt asymmetry has come into the fore again and reflecting itself in renewed struggle over policy and power. This struggle is actually a reflection of the problems and divisions of society. Pakistan's ethnic divisions have been taking their toll, both in physical and psychological terms, particularly in Sindh, Balochistan and the North-West Frontier Province. The ethnic strife is now a worldwide phenomenon and the Pakistani authorities have perhaps failed to realize that they are subject to the gravities of the same designs as some of them seek to fan in India. The struggle for power has become intertwined in the societal divides and conflicts and gets expressed in divergent attitudes and stances over immediate problems. That would explain the sharpening of the differences that first came to light over the Gulf crisis when the then army chief launched a sharp attack on American policy and conduct, whereas the country's prime minister was aligning the official policy with that of Washington. It was in fact an indication of the most serious troubles between the two centers of power.

Mr. Nawaz Sharif's difficulties were greatly aggravated by the economic power crisis, compounded by the suspension of U.S. military and economic aid. The prime minister in order to consolidate his position had adopted a three-pronged strategy to outflank his opponents, but even more, to meet the mounting challenges.

To meet the economic crisis and with an eye on the IMF loan, Nawaz Sharif withdrew virtually all controls on the economy in May this year. He announced the privatization of 160 public sector companies and the withdrawal of foreign exchange controls. He hoped that these steps would also soften American opposition to aid to Pakistan because of its nuclear weapons program. A month earlier, he had made a bid to win over the fundamentalist lobby through his Shariat bill which promised to Islamize education, media, the economy, and morality. Whether it really pleased the fundamentalists without alienating those who were disturbed at the increasing clout of the orthodoxy in Pakistan is another matter. Two messages were sought to be conveyed at the same time to the average voter—that the prime minister was not a fundamentalist, and to the religious political parties that there was no dispute over the enforcement of the Islamic order in the country because the people are free Muslims. The Shariat bill was accompanied by executive orders to give substance to the religious enactment.

The third prong was what one might call the Sindh card. The chief minister, Mr. Jam Sadiq, was allowed extensive freedom to browbeat his PPP [Pakistan People's Party] rival within or without the ambit of law so that Benazir Bhutto would be hamstrung in her own home province. The consequence has however been escalating and debilitating violence that is now engulfing larger and larger areas and a sharp deterioration in the law and order situation. The violence in Sindh became more

widespread with involvement of the so-called Muhajir migrants from India and the Pathan population in Karachi. The deterioration in the law and order situation has even spread to the Punjab.

Militants Kill BJP Candidate in Punjab 30 Aug

BK3008092691 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 30 Aug 91

[Text] In Punjab, the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] candidate for Verka assembly seat, Mr. Preetam Singh, was shot dead by militants in village Kambo Rodewala on the outskirts of Amritsar city last night.

According to police sources, militants entered Mr. Preetam Singh's house and opened fire, also killing his son-in-law and two body guards and also a neighbor. The election to this constituency had already been countermanded following the killing of an Akali Dal-Mann candidate in July.

Elsewhere in the state, seven militants and five security personnel were killed in separate incidents since last evening.

Peace Urged for Ayodhya in Uttar Pradesh

BK3008093491 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 30 Aug 91

[Text] The center has expressed the hope that the Uttar Pradesh [UP] government will not remain oblivious to the need for a peaceful solution of the Ayodhya dispute [over the claim on a shrine by the Hindus and Muslims]. The leader of the house, Mr. Arjun Singh, said in the Lok Sabha that the issue is a matter of grave concern to all and the state government cannot turn a blind eye to it in the larger interest of peace and tranquility in the country. He said the governemnt does not want to anticipate any situation.

Earlier, raising the matter, Syed Shahabuddin, Janata Dal, criticized the center for what he called maintaining a discreet silence over the issue. Several members belonging to the left parties, Janata Dal, IUML [Indian Union Muslim League] demanded the government's response.

Iran

Quadripartite Talks End; Statement Issued

LD2908121191 Tehran IRNA in English 1006 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] Tehran, Aug. 29, IRNA—The final session of the second quadrilateral meeting of officials of Iran and Pakistan and leaders of Afghan mojahedin based in Peshawar and Tehran was held here Thursday morning.

The two-day meeting, attended by Iran's Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati and Pakistan's Foreign Ministry Secretary General Akram Zaki, is a follow up of a similar meeting held in Islamabad last month.

In the closing session, a draft statement was read in which both Iran and Pakistan pledged full support for the rightful struggle of the Muslim people of Afghanistan.

The draft statement further stressed continuation of Iran-Pakistan joint efforts to settle the Afghan crisis and materialize aspirations of the Muslim people of Afghanistan. It also called for restoration of the Islamic, nonaligned and independent character of Afghanistan. It also underlined that any solution to the Afghan issue must lead to formation of an Islamic state elected by the muslim people of the country. The draft statement is being reviewed by the participants and is expected to be approved at the end of the session later today.

UN's Afghan Plan Supported

LD2908154891 Tehran IRNA in English 1332 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] Tehran, Aug. 29, IRNA—Iran, Pakistan and leaders of Afghan mojahedin groups based in the two countries released a statement at the end of their second tripartite talks today, terming the U.N. chief's 5-point peace plan for Afghanistan as "positive."

The statement also declared the mojahedin's readiness to enter into "basic negotiations" with Moscow, hoping that recent developments in the Soviet Union would facilitate a quick solution to the dozen-year old Afghan issue.

In their first tripartitie talks, held in Islamabad a month ago, the three sides voiced support for the 5-point plan offered by U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar. [passage indistinct] noted that the generally calm atmosphere in Czechoslovakia during the coup was not completely well-founded in view of the increased activity of the Western group of Soviet troops stationed in the former East Germany. [Word indistinct] thanked the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and the U.N. chief's envoy for supporting the decisions taken at the Islamabad session and expressed hope that with the backing of the international community such efforts would result in a peaceful setlement of the issue.

According to the statement, the third meeting between Iran, Pakistan and mojahedin leaders based in the two countries is to be held in Islamabad.

Present at the talks were Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati, Pakistani Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Akram Zaki and leaders of Afghan guerrilla groups.

Velayati, Zaki on Talks

LD2908162991 Tehran IRIB Television Second Program Network in Persian 1445 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] [Announcer] The second joint session between Iran, Pakistan and Afghan mojahedin based in both countries concluded in Tehran today. At today's session, attended by Iran's foreign minister, Mr. Velayati, and Pakistan's state minister in charge of foreign affairs, Mr.

Akram Zaki, the work of the gatherings committee was evaluated and the participants stressed that such session should continue to help find a solution to the Afghan dilemma, which must include the establishment of a government acceptable to the majority to the Afghan people. Foreign Minister Velayati had an interview with our correspondent at the conclusion of the second joint session.

[Begin recording in English] [Correspondent] I would like to ask you, Dr. Velayati, to begin by briefly explaining Iran's stand on the Afghanistan problem, and also what role you think it can play in helping to bring about a solution to that country's problem.

[Velayati] In the name of God, the magnificent, the merci'ful. Since the very beginning, after the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet forces, we have said repeatedly that Soviet forces should withdraw from Afghanistan; and we support a Muslim, nonaligned and independent government in Afghanistan. We still have the same position.

[Correspondent] What do you think the main points of differences are among the various Afghan political groups and parties?

[Velayati] Fortunately, now the majority of the Afghan mojahedin groups are very close together. Those who are in this meeting, I mean the Tehran meeting, are the majority of mojahedin groups. And if you consider the Islamabad declaration you will find out that they have taken an important and positive step toward more unification among themselves. But still there are some other groups, but they are minorities that are against what this majority have agreed upon. And also there is some other political differences. This is our hope that with the efforts by Pakistan and Iran—and the leaders of mojahedin—gradually we will be able to eliminate the differences that they have among themselves.

[Correspondent] Dr. Velayati, thank you very much. [end recording]

[Announcer] The visiting Pakistani foreign minister, Mr. Akram Zaki, was also interviewed by our correspondent.

[Begin recording in English] [Correspondent] I would like to start by asking you, Mr. Zaki, if you would briefly explain Pakistan's stance on the Afghanistan problem, and also what role you think your country can play in actually bringing about a final solution to those problems.

[Zaki] In the name of God, the magnificent, the merciful. Pakistan is the next door neighbor of Afghanistan, and when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in December '79, a large number of Afghan refugees came to Pakistan to seek refuge. And since then, Pakistan, as a Muslim country—brotherly Muslim country—was obliged to provide them with refuge and to look after them. It has been our endeavor to mobilize international public opinion to support the refugees and to support the struggle of Afghan peoples to save their country from foreign invasion, and to return to their home with dignity and honor.

Question now: During the struggle the various groups were working together, but unfortunately they fell apart before achieving their final objective of having a government of their own choice. so what we are trying to do is to—with the help of Iran now—to bring the various mojahedin group together.

[Correspondent] Finally, Mr. Zaki, do you see peace and stability in Afghanistan actually becoming a reality? And also how do you see the structure of the next Afghan government?

[Zaki] We would want the Afghan people to choose their own government. And we feel that the majority of the Afghan people want an Islamic government dedicated to peace and progress and good-neighborly relations with all the countries in the area. So we expect, if the mojahedin succeed, there will be peace in the region. [end recording]

President Receives Delegates

LD2908173591 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani received delegates of the second joint Iran, Pakistan, Afghan mojahedin talks this evening. During that meeting, Foreign Minister Velayati briefed the president on the talks, held in Tehran. Velayati termed the decisions adopted at that session as a positive step toward solving the problems facing the Muslim people of Afghanistan. Hashemi-Rafsanjani stressed the significance of further unity among Afghan mojahedin and their efforts to end, as soon as possible, the difficult and unsettled situation. He expressed the hope that the participants in the talks can resolve as soon as possible the problems facing the people of Afghanistan, using the help of others who have an influence over the situation.

During that meeting, Akram Zaki, Pakistan's state minister for foreign affairs, addressed the president, and said: Your excellency's remarks account for all our emotions. Iran, Pakistan and the Afghan mojahedin should jointly strive to eliminate the Afghan people's problems. The Islamic Republic of Iran's support in that regard provides us with confidence.

Mr. Mojaddadi, one of the Afghan mojahedin leaders, thanked the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan for their support for the deprived Muslim people of Afghanistan, and said: The setting up of the joint session in Tehran brought about a very satisfactory improvement with regard to the problem of Afghanistan, and had positive effects on the world of Islam and the Third World.

During the meeting, Mr. Mortazavi, speaker of the Islamic Unity Party, elaborated on the positive and useful effects of the current joint session, and said: The

Muslim people of Afghanistan see the talks as a window of opportunity to solve the problem of Afghanistan.

Besharati on Conference, USSR Events

LD2808152391 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0645 GMT 28 Aug 91

["Exclusive" interview with First Deputy Foreign Minister 'Ali Besharati by unidentified correspondent on 26 August; place not given—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Correspondent] Mr. Besharati, could you be so kind as to tell our listeners about the grounds behind the U.S. proposal of a Middle East conference and also about the consequences it will have.

[Besharati] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Following the developments that occurred after the occupation of Kuwait by the Iraqi regime, and the unprecedented split that took place in Islamic countries, especially in Arab countries—and in particular in the frontline countries, U.S. imperialism realized the advantages of the situation and used the opportunity to fulfil the longstanding dream of world Zionism to strengthen the foundations of the regime occupying Jerusalem. It presented its plan, under the title of a Middle East Peace conference, to the world.

In a single sentence, the aim of the plan is to bring Islamic countries to their knees and obtain their unconditional surrender before the regime occupying Jerusalem. Many countries consider themselves and the independence of their countries to be indebted to U.S. assistance and support, even the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council member countries, in the face of the Iraqi regime. This regime was armed to the teeth and was, with the occupation of Kuwait, staking a claim to the leadership of the Arab world and showing, by its slogans, that it would not limit itself to Kuwait. We had possible signs that, after Kuwait, Iraq would turn to other countries and they felt the danger very well. By reliance and dependence on the United States, they liberated Kuwait. With the horrific blows which were inflicted on the Iraqi regime, the danger of a possible attack by Iraq on the countries of the region was completely removed.

In return for this service which the United States has rendered them, Arab countries must now take a positive step in this regard. We see, therefore, that when a peace plan is proposed, most Arab countries, or I could say all of them, should give a positive response. Even though U.S. forces have left the Persian Gulf region, nevertheless, a great quantity of their weapons remain in occupied Palestine, and they have made that the West's arsenal. It is obvious that these weapons are intended for two things. One, for use by U.S. rapid reaction forces, to enable them to intervene militarily in any country whenever they like. Second, so that they can strengthen the regime occupying Jerusalem in such a way that no Arab country, nor even the entire Arab community, will harbor any thought of attacking the regime occupying Jerusalem.

These, then, are the intentions and goals of the peace plan. As to whether they will be realized or not, that is another matter. We are certain that, even though the occupation of Kuwait was a shock to the world of Islam and the world became aware of the danger posed by the Iraqi regime to the countries of the region, nevertheless, in due course, Islamic and Arab countries will recover and they will once again turn to the danger posed by the regime occuping Jerusalem. They will not allow the United States to impose whatever it wishes, and especially the reinforcement of the regime occupying Jerusalem, on the region. The Islamic Republic of Iran is the standardbearer of a movement which condemns any kind of compromise aimed at strengthening and reinforcing the shaky foundations of the regime occupying Jerusalem, and it has asked the world's liberation forces, organizations, and foundations to prevent the realization of that dream. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Mr. Besharati, in general, what effect will the recent developments in the Soviet Union have on the region?

[Besharati] In my personal opinion, Mr. Gorbachev is a brave man. After the death of Chernenko, the last secretary general of a strong communist party in the Soviet Union, Gorbachev realized the inadequacies of Marxism for running the largest country in the world with a variety of cultures and nationalities. [passage omitted]

In connection with reform, there were three groups in the Soviet Union. There was one group which was in step with Gorbachev, supporting his reforms and advancing with him. There was a second group, consisting of more radical reformers who thought that Gorbachev was going too slowly and that his reforms should proceed more rapidly; Yeltsin, the Russian president, heads this group. There was another group consisting of conservatives, old communists, long-time members of the Soviet Communist Party and supporters of Brezhnev, which harbored dreams of superpower status and having world hegemony; they considered Gorbachev's reforms to be contrary to their country's ideals and they opposed the reforms. This last group saw an opportunity, and, embarking on an action, with the help of some military and KGB leaders removed Gorbachev from power, saying: We will follow Brezhnev's path.

As I said, the Soviet Union's problems were so extensive that whoever had been in Gorbachev's place would have taken the same path, because no other solution to the Soviet Union's economic problems was imaginable. Marxism and the continuation of normal Soviet and Politburo methods did not offer solutions to the Soviet Union's problems.

Soviet developments undoubtedly ended up to the advantage, in the first instance, of Gorbachev, because

an opportunity was created in which all of Gorbachev's rivals who might have seized power if Gorbachev had, for whatever reason, left the stage—the coup d'etat led to the identification and elimination of such people.

On the whole, we considered the Soviet developments to be the business of the Soviet Union. From the beginning, when these developments and the coup d'etat occurred, the Islamic Republic of Iran carefully followed Soviet developments, but did not take a stance, because it considered them to be internal matters of the Soviet Union.

Today we can see that, upon Mr. Gorbachev's return to power, one of his first actions was to send a message to our country's president. Perhaps Gorbachev was aware that we, as a powerful country which has a 2,500-km border with the Soviet Union and which has great influence on neighboring republics, have never taken any steps to provoke or embolden the people of those republics. Soviet leaders are grateful to the Islamic republic for this.

In any case, we want better relations with the Soviet Union. We increased our ties with Mr. Gorbachev from the beginning. In a single sentence, Gorbachev's leadership is of importance to us and it has provided a good opportunity for the Islamic Republic. We believe that our relations with the Soviet Union will be even better and that ties will increase in all areas.

Pakistan

Investigator in Zardari Case Assassinated

BK2708120691 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] Malik Ehsan, the investigating officer in the Ghulam Hussain Unnar case of kidnapping of London-based Pakistani businessman Murtaza Bukhari, was killed by unidentified gunmen in the jurisdiction of (Napier) police station in Karachi this morning. He was going to drop his son and two daughters at the local school when unidentified assailants riding on motorcycles [words indistinct] Kalashnikov fire, killing him on the spot. His son was also injured, but the two daughters escaped unhurt. Malik Ehsan had investigated the case of kidnapping of Mr. Murtaza Bukhari and extortion of 10 million rupees from him by tying a remote-controlled bomb with his (?thigh). Asif Ali Zardari; Ghulam Hussain Unnar, an MPA [member of provincial assembly] in the then People's Party government; and two other persons—Babar Jamali and Nur Nabi Abbasi—are facing trial in this case. Three other accused are absconding.

20 PPP Members Jailed

BK2808133691 Hong Kong AFP in English 1223 GMT 28 Aug 91

[Text] Karachi, Aug 28 (AFP)—More than 20 activists of former Premier Benazir Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party (PPP) were arrested here Wednesday in connection with this week's murder of a police officer, police said.

Malik Ehasan, 50, investigating officer in cases involving Bhutto's husband Asif Ali Zardari and several other PPP supporters, was shot dead while driving his son to school here Tuesday.

He was main prosecution witness in Zardari's kidnapping trial and had also been involved in a murder investigation involving Bhutto's husband.

Another person accused in the abduction case, Ghulam Hussain Unnar, was released on bail in March after he renounced his PPP membership.

Senior provincial government officials have blamed the PPP for the slaying of the police officer but the party has denied the allegation.

A police source said Wednesday that special security measures had been put into force to protect judges and officials dealing with the cases.

A judge heading a special anti-terrorism court was gunned down here in June leading to the arrest of several PPP members.

Spokesman on Clashes With India in Kashmir

BK2808162691 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 28 Aug 91

[Text] Pakistani and Indian military officials agreed to bring the situation under control on the Line of Control in Kashmir. Stating this, a Foreign Office spokesman confirmed that some clashes have taken place on the Line of Control. However, these have not been of a serious nature. Relevant military officials of the two countries have been in contact with each other. There have been minimum casualties in these clashes. The spokesman said that Pakistani defense officials are keeping a constant vigil on the border situation.

When asked about press reports on the Indian military exercises on the Rajasthan border, the spokesman said the Pakistani military officials have no information on the movement or deployment of Indian forces in the Rajasthan sector.

Kashmir Issue To Be Raised at Nonaligned Meeting

BK2808161591 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 28 Aug 91

[Text] Pakistan is to raise the Kashmir issue at the nonaligned foreign ministers conference beginning in Accra, the capital of Ghana, on 4 September. It is aimed at effectively presenting all aspects of the issue to the international community and stressing the need for its peaceful settlement in accordance with UN resolutions. A Foreign Office spokesman said in Islamabad today that a peaceful settlement of the Kashmir dispute is an

essential condition for the improvement of Pakistan-India relations. H e said that Pakistan has adhered to the policy of reducing tension with India and it feels that the two countries should mutually strive to peacefully resolve their bilateral issues.

The spokesman said that the Afghan issue will also be considered by the nonaligned conference and Pakistan will stress its stand on a political settlement of the issue so as to enable the Afghan refugees to return home. The spokesman said that a Pakistani delegation led by Foreign Affairs Secretary General Akram Zaki will highlight the Pakistani stand on major international political and economic issues at the four-day conference. He said Pakistan feels that despite the changes at the international level, the Nonaligned Movement should play a role in establishing an order based on justice, peace, and prosperity.

Answering a question, the spokesman said that talks are under way between Pakistan and France on finalizing arrangements for an agreement on the supply of a nuclear power plant to Pakistan.

Ousted Azad Kashmir Premier Sues Government

BK2408093491 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 24 Aug 91

[Text] The former prime minister of the Pak-occupied Kashmir, Mr. Mumtaz Hussain Rathore, has challenged his dismissal by the Pakistan Government in the International Court of Justice. He stated this at a news conference in Lahore yesterday. Mr. Rathore demanded that Pakistan should relinquish occupation of the areas of Kashmir occupied by it and should stop interfering in its affairs.

400 Kurdish Refugees Protest Repatriation to Iraq

BK2908142991 Hong Kong AFP in English 1407 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] Quetta, Pakistan Aug 29 (AFP)—Some 400 Kurdish refugees staged a demonstration here Thursday to protest their planned repatriation to Iraq by the United Nations.

"No Return to Iraq," the demonstrators, comprising mainly women and children, chanted during their hour-long protest in front of the offices of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), witnesses said.

The demonstrators also handed a letter to UNHCR officials calling for continued UN assistance to the uprooted Kurds.

The UNHCR has decided to end economic assistance to Kurdish refugees based in Quetta, the capital of Pakistan's southwestern Balochistan Province, from October. "Instead we would be offering them their safe and dignified return to Iraq by air under UN expenses," the UNHCR chief here, Phillipe Labreveux told reporters.

Labreveux, said those Kurdish refugees who remained in Quetta even after October "will only be getting medical assistance."

The Kurds crossed over to Pakistan from Iran during its eight-year bloody war with Iraq.

Bhutto Warns of Separation of Sindh Province

BK3008032091 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 30 Aug 91

[Text] The Pakistan People's Party leader, Benazir Bhutto, says if the Nawaz Sharif government persists with its plan to resettle lakhs of Bihari Muslims from Bangladesh in Sindh, it will force the province toward separation. Addressing a news conference at Nawabshah in Sindh, she said Islamabad's plan is part of a conspiracy to convert the Sindhis into a minority in their own homeland. The FRONTIER POST of Peshawar has also hinted that Islamabad government's scheme to bring all Sindhi nominated districts under the control of the central government is aimed at suppressing them.

Government Embarks on Privatization Campaign

BK2908162691 Hong Kong AFP in English 1135 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] Islamabad, Aug 29 (AFP)—The Pakistani Government Thursday embarked on an unprecedented sell off of 90 state-run projects to the private sector.

The privatisation commission, set up by the 10-month old government of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, has invited bids from individuals, groups and companies by October 10. The government is getting rid of state companies considered a financial liability and has invited prospective buyers to take them over.

Advertisements in the local press announced the companies on offer. Among them are seven automobile units, 14 cement factories, 21 edible oil processing mills, together with five fertilizer, eight engineering and 11 chemical plant projects.

The commission has also decided to denationalise 24 other projects including wool and textile mills, and bread manufacturing plants.

The bulk sale of "sick units" is the first in the country's 44-year history and is part of Sharif's policy of ridding the state of 100 loss-making facilities, judged to be over-staffed and mismanaged.

Shahbaz Sharif, the prime minister's brother and an industrialist, told AFP that those companies had cost the exchequer accumulative losses of more than 27 billion rupees (about 1.12 billion U.S. dollars). Shahbaz, an

unofficial advisor to the premier, is seen by many as one of the key men behind the government's economic reforms.

He dismissed workers' criticismn of the sell off policy, saying "we want to protect the interest of the working class." He said the government would ensure that new management did not resort to retrenchment for at least one year.

He estimated that between 10,000 and 15,000 workers might be laid off as the companies changed hands but said the government would compensate them.

Principal opposition leader Benazir Bhutto has slammed Sharif's privatization policy claiming that it was to benefit "favourites". She vowed to renationalize the units when she regained power.

Trade union sources said protest strikes and poster campaigns continued in many factories urging the government to change its mind.

The government has already sold the Muslim Commercial Bank to a private group of industrialists and the management of Allied Bank Limited has been replaced by a consortium of its employees.

The government also plans to privatize two remaining state-owned banks, and has lifted a 20-year ban on individuals opening commercial banks.

Sharif, as he handed authorisation letters to 10 big business concerns to open new banks here Monday, said he would press ahead with his reform agenda "to transform the economy and put it on a higher growth path."

He said his highest priority was to make Pakistan a self-reliant nation and his economic policy was "designed to improve the environment for saving and investment."

Sri Lanka

Opposition, Ruling Party To Impeach Premadasa

BK2808165091 Hong Kong AFP in English 1641 GMT 28 Aug 91

[Text] Colombo, August 28 (AFP)—Sri Lanka's main opposition party announced late Wednesday it had won the support of dozens of government MP's to impeach President Ranasinghe Premadasa and had enough to support a vote in Parliament.

A spokesman for the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) said they handed over the petition with signatures of more than 113 MP's, the number consititutionally required to debate the impeachment motion.

The six-page document was not available but sources said the president was being charged with murder, fabricating evidence and violating the Constitution.

A two-thirds majority in the 225-member Legislative Assembly would be required to oust the president, who came to power after narrowly winning the December 1988 election.

Speaker Mohammad Hanifa Mohammad declined direct comment, citing his constitutional position. But "if the SLFP says they have handed over a motion to me, then they must be correct," he said.

Sources also said 43 MP's from Premadasa's United National Party [UNP] had signed the petition, throwing the country into a constitutional crisis.

The dates for the debate on the latest motion had not yet been fixed.

A leftist opposition MP, Vasudeva Nanayakkara, described government MPs' siding with the opposition as a significant development and said moves were underway to win a two-thirds majority to oust Premadasa.

"Premadasa is doomed. He will try to have the debate as soon as possible so that there will be that much less time to win over more UNPers," he told AFP.

"There is going to be a serious crisis in Parliament now."

He said he was aware of at least one senior member of the UNP who had signed the document, charging that Premadasa was unable to govern the country.

Constitutional Crisis Created

BK2908045091 Hong Kong AFP in English 0413 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] Colombo, August 29 (AFP)—An opposition motion to impeach President Ranasinghe Premadasa with the backing of his own MPs has triggered a major constitutional crisis in Sri Lanka, political anaylsts here said Thursday.

The main opposition Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) said it had petitioned speaker Mohammad Hanifa Mohammad with the signatures of more than 113 MPs—the number consititutionally required to debate the impeachment motion.

However, a two-thirds majority in the 225-member legislative assembly is required to oust Premadasa who narrowly won a December 1988 election marred by anti-government violence.

If carried, the resolution should be directed to the Supreme Court which will have to refer its findings back to parliament for approval with a two-thirds majority.

Political analysts said the resolution has immediately taken away Premadasa's powers to dissolve parliament and call fresh general elections.

There is no immediate danger to Premadasa because of the complicated impeachment procedure on charges of attempted murder, bribery, treason and intentional violation of the constitution.

However, political analysts said the opposition could get through a motion of no confidence against the government, thus plunging the country into a serious political crisis.

A no-confidence motion requires only a simple majority in parliament which the opposition has now won with the support of dissident ruling MPs. Since Premadasa is already precluded from dissolving parliament, there cannot be fresh elections.

"We are heading for a major constitutional crisis. What is more significant is that the government no longer has a majority in parliament," leader of the minor liberal party Chanaka Amaratunga said.

The motion is a serious embarassment to the 67-year-old president who had tried to instill stricter type discipline among the ministers and members of his United National Party (UNP).

However, there had been some dissatisfaction among high profile UNP members who were sidelined after Premadasa came to power.

The state-run DAILY NEWS which reflects government views said there were no grounds for impeachment of the president and reported that the move had been inspired by the SLFP to cover up their own internal leadership rivalries.

The DAILY NEWS said the SLFP hierarchy was plunged in "deep conflict" and had moved the motion fearing a snap general election. One SLFP MP had refused to sign the six-page petition.

Political sources said 43 UNP MPs had signed the petition. The DAILY NEWS did not name the UNP dissidents, but said they were those who had been stripped by Premadasa of their positions for misconduct.

A leftist opposition MP, Vasudeva Nanayakkara, described government MPs siding with the opposition as a significant development and said moves were underway to win a two thirds majority to overthrow Premadasa.

"Premadasa is doomed. He will try to have the debate as soon as poosible so that there will be that much less time to win over more UNP MPs. Anyway, there is going to be a serious crisis in parliament now," he told AFP.

SLFP leader Sirima Bandaranaike, who lost the 1988 presidential election, is also challenging Premadasa's election in the Supreme Court in a case unrelated to the latest motion.

Genesis of Constitutional Crisis

BK2908142091 Hong Kong AFP in English 1400 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] Colombo, August 29 (AFP)—Sri Lanka plunged into its first major constitutional crisis Thursday as President Ranasinghe Premadasa faced a barrage of charges including treason and covering up murder.

Senior United National Party (UNP) politicians and top officials held an emergency session to listen to Premadasa whose government is in crisis after 46 UNP MPs rebelled to support an opposition motion impeaching the president.

The state radio quoted Premadasa as saying he would uphold the Constitution and ensure the safety and security of the state and the people. He said service commanders had already pledged him their support.

Political circles here had expected some purging of the party but there was no immediate word from the UNP leadership.

Government Spokesman Ranil Wickremesinghe told reporters earlier that the UNP was confident the motion would be defeated.

"We are heading for a major constitutional crisis. What is more significant is that the government no longer has a majority in parliament," leader of the minor Liberal Party Chanaka Amaratunga said.

Wickremesinghe, a frontliner in the government, played down the crisis at the weekly cabinet press briefing Thursday and said a vote on the floor of the house would be the real test.

"I can tell you that the motion will not get to the Supreme Court.... The cabinet felt that there is no reason to proceed against the president," Wickremesinghe said.

A copy of the motion released to the press here late Thursday listed details of allegations against Premadasa accusing him of, among other things, covering up the assassination of a foreign correspondent Richard de Zoysa last year.

Earlier, some MPs had said Premadasa himself was guilty of murder. The motion says the president, 67, "knowingly prevented" investigations into the slayings of two others.

The opposition accuses Premadasa of usurping the powers of cabinet ministers antagonising friendly nations, setting up special units to destroy political opponents and tapping telephones.

"The president is guilty of bribery and/or corruption and/or nepotism and/or abuse of power," it said adding that the president had "intentionally violated" the Constitution to turn the country into a "one-man dictatorship."

The president cannot function any more because of his "mental and physical infirmity," the motion said, citing 24

instances, including attempts to use books written by others to portray himself as an author, poet and intellectual.

The main opposition Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) said they petitioned speaker Mohammad Hanifa Mohammad with signatures of more than 113 MPs, the number constitutionally required to debate the impeachment motion.

The entire strength of the opposition in the 225-member assembly is only 100. But about a dozen Tamil MPs in the opposition have kept out of the issue forcing the rebels to muster at least 29 more government MPs to win a majority to oust Premadasa.

Experts of the Constitution said the speaker entertaining the resolution had removed Premadasa's powers to dissolve parliament and call fresh general elections. However, Premadasa faced no immediate danger because of the complicated procedure before his impeachment.

But the opposition could carry through a motion of no confidence against the government. A no-confidence vote requires only a simple majority in parliament which the opposition has now won with the support of dissident UNP MPs.

Tamil politicians nervously watched the rapid political developments in Colombo, and said they were concerned that the country's dragging ethnic conflict would be overshadowed.

Premadasa is also accused of failing to resolve the Tamil question and blamed for the failed peace talks with separatist Tamil tiger guerrillas in June last year leading to fresh fighting.

Emergency Cabinet Meeting Held

BK2908114291 Hong Kong AFP in English 1111 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] Colombo, August 29 (AFP)—Senior ruling party politicians held an emergency meeting here Thursday to discuss the Sri Lankan political crisis after rebel MPs backed an opposition move to impeach the president, officials said.

President Ranasinghe Premadasa, 67, called the meeting amid reports that some senior members of his United National Party (UNP) had signed a motion accusing him of murder, bribery and a host of other allegations.

Political observers speculated that Premadasa might drop several ministers whose loyalty was in doubt.

However, cabinet spokesman Ranil Wickremesinghe told reporters earlier Thursday that the cabinet during its weekly meeting Wednesday had fully supported the president.

There were no grounds to proceed against him, Wickremesinghe said.

Political sources said some 45 UNP MPs had signed the six-page motion to oust Premadasa, which would make the ruling party a minority parliament and plunge the country into a major political crisis.

Armed Force, Police Support President

BK2908112291 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] The commanders of the Army, Navy, and Air Force and the inspector general of police have assured the people and the Government of Sri Lanka that they will uphold the Constitution and render all assistance to the commander in chief of the armed forces and minister of defense, President Ranasinghe Premadasa, to maintain law and order and preserve the democratic form of government. This is stated in a press release issued by the Defense Ministry.

Delhi Radio on Impeachement Move

BK2908131591 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 29 Aug 91

[Text] The Sri Lankan Cabinet has expressed full faith in President Premadasa in the wake of the move by some members of Parliament to impeach him. Mr. Premadasa informed the Cabinet meeting in Colombo about the communication he has received from the speaker regarding the notice submitted by about 125 members seeking his removal on the ground of alleged misconduct. The heads of armed forces and the police have also pledged their support for President Premadasa to preserve the democratic form of government. The main opposition party—the Sri Lanka Freedom Party—is meeting in Colombo tomorrow for a discussion on the impeachment move.

Two Ministers Resign

BK3008055091 Hong Kong AFP in English 0529 GMT 30 Aug 91

[Text] Colombo, August 30 (AFP)—Some government MPs who signed a motion to impeach Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa had been misled into believing the petition was something different, press reports said Friday.

Meanwhile, two senior cabinet ministers backing the motion resigned Thursday.

Education Minister Lalith Athulathmudali and Labour Minister G.M. Premachandra told a joint news conference here that they had tendered their resignations to Premadasa, adding they would struggle to "change the executive presidency and strengthen parliamentary democracy."

Some 46 MPs from the ruling United National Party signed the motion seeking to remove Premadasa who came to office in 1989.

The state-run DAILY NEWS said at least three MPs from the ruling United National Party (UNP) had

written to the speaker retracting their signatures from the impeachement motion that has triggered a constitutional crisis here.

The DAILY NEWS said three MPs—Dharmadeva Jayasinghe from central Kegalle, V.G. Jinadasa from central Matale and Vincent Jayewardene from southern Galle—were retracting their signatures.

The newspaper quoted the MPs as saying in a letter to speaker Mohammad Haniffa Mohammad that their signatures were obtained "by a misrepresentation of fact" on the contents of the motion.

They were not informed nor were they aware that the resolution was an impeachment motion against Premadasa, the newspaper quoted the MPs as saying in the letter.

It was not clear whether the Constitution allows for signatures to be withdrawn from a motion once it has been received by the speaker.

Some 46 government MPs were reported to have signed the motion along with opposition MPs but their names have still not been released.

The main opposition Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) said they petitioned the speaker with the signatures of more than 113 MPs, the number consititutionally required to debate the impeachment motion.

The entire strength of the opposition in the 225-member assembly is only 100.

Premadasa told an emergency meeting of government MPs and senior civil servants late Thursday that some UNP MPs had informed him they had signed "a certain document but were told that it was one asking that parliament not be dissolved." "When some of them signed the documents, the signatures were covered by a certain person with his hand. They had signed trusting the person who had asked them to do so.

"The prime minister and leader of the House will look into this matter on behalf of the party," Premadasa said.

But whatever the political crisis, Premadasa said he would uphold the Constitution and ensure the safety and security of the state and the people, adding the country's military commanders had already pledged him their support.

In an editorial, the DAILY NEWS said the entire impeachment effort "has been shrouded in secrecy and had an element of the cloak and dagger."

Meanwhile, the newspaper quoted a leading Buddhist priest, Kithalagama Sri Seelalankara Thera, calling the impeachment motion "an act of treachery" and "political sabotage."

The newspaper also quoted former speaker Stanley Tillekeratne as saying that a heavy responsibility lay with the speaker who had to be "above board" and "impartially examine" the motion.

Tillekeratne was the only one of 67 SLFP MPs who refused to sign the resolution.

A copy of the motion released to the press here listed details of allegations against Premadasa accusing him of, among other things, covering up the assassination of foreign correspondent Richard de Zoysa last year.

The opposition accuses Premadasa of usurping the powers of cabinet ministers, antagonising friendly nations, setting up special units to destroy political opponents and tapping telephones.

"The president is guilty of bribery and/or corruption and/or nepotism and/or abuse of power," it said adding that the president had "intentionally violated" the constitution to turn the country into a "one-man dictatorship."

Constitutional experts said that by receiving the petition, the speaker had immediately removed Premadasa's powers to dissolve parliament and call fresh general elections.

However, Premadasa does not face any immediate danger because of the complicated procedure involved in an impeachment.

But the opposition could carry through a motion of no confidence against the government. A no-confidence vote requires only a simple majority in parliament which the opposition could win with the support of dissident UNP MPs.

"As of now the ruling party (UNP) has no majority in parliament," Athulathmudali said, adding he was confident that the motion would be carried through.

The two ministers said more governemnt MPs had pledged their support and denied local press reports that several UNP MPs had been tricked into signing the motion.

Another rebel UNP MP who signed the motion, Gamini Dissanayake, said he had done it because government MPs were not given a chance to express themselves freely.

There was a complete stifling of freedom of expression within the party, Dissanayake told the news conference.

"I am thankful to the president for the assurance that constitutional procedures would be adhered to. We ask no more," the backbench MP said.

Premadasa told an emergency meeting of government MPs late Thursday that he would uphold the Constitution whatever the political crisis.

Parliament Suspended Amid Crisis

BK3008080291 Hong Kong AFP in English 0750 GMT 30 Aug 91

[Text] Colombo, Aug 30 (AFP)—President Ranasinghe Premadasa suspended parliament Friday until September 24 as the resignation of two senior ministers deepened Sri Lanka's political crisis.

State-radio announced the proroguing of parliament, which effectively delays debate of an opposition motion to impeach Premadasa with the backing of dozens of government MPs.

The move came hours after Education Minister Lalith Athulathmudali and Labour Minister G.M. Premachandra said they were confident of mustering enough support from ruling party legislators to overthrow Premadasa.

Athulathmudali, a key figure in the United National Party (UNP), said earlier that the government had lost its majority in parliament with "over 40 UNP MPs" backing a move to oust Premadasa.

"We struggle not for or against a single man. We fight against ideals," he said. Athulathmudali and his group were trying to scrap the presidential system of government introduced in 1978 and restore a Westminster-type parliament.

Athulathmudali said they were confident of carrying through the motion to impeach Premadasa on a wide range of charges, from treason to covering up of murder and abuse of power since he assumed office in January 1989.

9 Ministers Reportedly Resign

BK3008092091 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 30 Aug 91

[Text] In Sri Lanka, nine ministers are reported to have resigned in the wake of the move by some members of Parliament to impeach President Premadasa on grounds of alleged misconduct. The minister for higher education, Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali, who was also among the nine, told a news conference in Colombo this morning that the government has lost majority support in Parliament as about 125 members have signed a petition seeking President Premadasa's removal. Two more ministers—Mr. Premachandran and Mr. Gamini Dissanayake—were present at the press conference.

AIR [All India Radio] Colombo correspondent understands that some more members of Parliament from the ruling United National Party, who had not signed the petition, have come forward to support it. At another press conference, seven opposition parties, including the SLFP [Sri Lanka Freedom Party], said the action to remove the president has been taken to prevent, what they said, erosion of democracy, mass scale abuse of human rights, and undemocratic rule.

Under the Sri Lankan constitution, a two third majority of the whole house, including those not present, is needed in every step in the impeachment move. However, the speaker can entertain a notice signed by a more than half of the strength, if he is satisfied that the allegations merit inquiry by the Supreme Court. The ruling United National Party has a strength of 125 in the 225-member house of which 12 seats are now vacant.